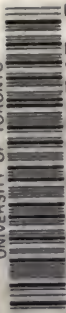


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THE  
LIFE AND TIMES  
OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

BY  
JOHN FORSTER,  
AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS," "WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

AFTER DESIGNS BY  
C. STANFIELD, R.A., D. MACLISE, R.A., JOHN LEECH, RICHARD DOYLE  
and ROBERT JAMES HAMERTON.

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XIII

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OLIVER GOLDSMITH (TITLE-PAGE). FROM THE FULL-LENGTH STATUE BY  
J. H. FOLEY, R.A., PLACED AT THE GATE OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

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BOOK III.

(CONTINUED.)

AUTHORSHIP BY CHOICE.

1759 to 1767.



## BOOK THE THIRD.

(CONTINUED.)

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### CHAPTER XIV.

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OLD DRUDGERY WITH A NEW HOPE.

1766.

“SATURDAY will be published,” said the *Public Advertiser* of the 20th of May, 1766, “in two volumes in twelves, price 6s. bound, “or 5s. sewed, the second edition of *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

“A Tale. Supposed to be written by himself. *Sperate* <sup>1766.</sup>  
*miseri, cavete felices.* Printed for F. Newbery, at the <sub>Æt. 33.</sub>

“Crown in Pater-noster Row.”—And on that very Saturday a bill which Oliver Goldsmith had drawn upon Mr. John Newbery, for fifteen guineas, was returned dishonoured. But the old time did not come back with the old necessities. If solid rewards were not now to wait on even the happiest of Goldsmith’s achievements, he was never again to lose courage and hope, or to show signs of yielding in the struggle. He had always his accustomed resource, and went uncomplaining to the desk.

Payne the bookseller gave him in this month ten guineas for compiling a duodecimo volume of “*Poems for Young Ladies*. In “three parts: Devotional, Moral, and Entertaining.” It was a respectable selection of pieces, chiefly from Parnell, Pope, Thomson, Addison, and Collins; with additions of less importance from less eminent hands, and some occasional verses which he supposed

to be his friend Robert Nugent's,\* but which were really written by Lord Lyttelton. It has been assumed to have been in this book "for young ladies" that two objectionable pieces by <sup>1766.</sup> Prior were inserted; but the statement, though sanctioned <sup>Æt. 38.</sup> by Percy, is incorrect. It was in a more extensive compilation of *Beauties of English Poetry Selected*, published in the following year, and for the gathering together of which Griffin the bookseller gave him fifty pounds, that he made that questionable choice of the "Ladle" and "Hans Carvel," which for once interdicted from general reading a book with his name upon its title-page. This was unlucky: for the selection in other respects, making allowance for a limited acquaintance with the earlier English poets, was a reasonably good one; and in this, as well as in its preface and brief notices of the pieces quoted, though without any claim to originality or critical depth, was not undeserving of what he claimed generally for books of the kind as entitling them to fair reward.† He used to point to them as illustrating, better than any other kind of compilations, "the art of profession" in authorship. "Judgment," he said, "is to be paid for in such selections; and a man may be twenty years of his life cultivating his judgment."‡ But he has also, with its

\* The origin of the mistake is obvious. Nugent had written an "Epistle to —," beginning

"Clarinda, dearly lov'd, attend  
The counsels of a faithful friend;"

and this had become confounded in Goldsmith's recollection with Lyttelton's "Advice to a Lady," beginning

"The counsels of a friend, Belinda, hear."

† His old friend Griffiths nevertheless laid hold of it to assail him in the *Monthly Review*, which had the good taste thus to speak of the now avowed author of *The Citizen of the World*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and *The Traveller*. "Though Mr. Goldsmith hath written some little pieces that have been read and approved of, yet, from his preface, notes, and introductions to these poems, one would almost be inclined to think he had never written before." *Monthly Review*, xxxvi. 490, June 1767. The reviewer's wrath was greatly excited by Goldsmith's having said of Shenstone's *Schoolmistress* that it was "one of those happinesses in which a poet excels himself"—but is it not true? Which of the *Pastorals* has survived with it in the love and admiration of the readers of poetry?

‡ *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 94. Cooke tells us that his own account of this selection was "that he did nothing but mark the particular passages with a red-lead pencil, and

help, to be mindful of changes in the public taste, to which he may himself have contributed. Nothing is more frequent than these, and few things so sudden. Staid wives will shrink with abhorrence in their fortieth autumn, from what they read <sup>1766.</sup> <sub>Æt. 38.</sub> with delight in their twentieth summer; and it was now even less than twenty years since that faultless "family expositor" Dr. Doddridge (as we learn from the letters of the pious divine) thought it no sin to read the *Wife of Bath's Tale* to young Nancy Moore, and take his share in the laugh it raised.\* Dr. Johnson himself had not forgotten those habits and ways of his youth; and amazed Boswell, some ten years later, by asserting that *Prior* was a lady's book, and that no lady was ashamed to have it standing in her library.

The Doctor could hardly have taken part in the present luckless selection, however, for through all the summer and autumn months of the year he had withdrawn from his old haunts and friends, and taken refuge with the Thrales. The latter, happening to visit him in Johnson's-court one day at the close of spring, had found him on his knees in such a passion of morbid melancholy, beseeching

"for this he got 200*l.*" He only got a fourth of that sum, as we see; the rest perhaps was a little braggadocio for admirers at the Wednesday Club.

\* *Memoirs and Correspondence of Doddridge*, iv. 182. Walter Scott was acquainted with an old lady of family, who assured him that, in her younger days, Mrs. Behn's novels were as currently upon the toilet as the works of Miss Edgeworth at present; and described with some humour her own surprise when, the book falling into her hands after a long interval of years and when its contents were quite forgotten, she found it altogether impossible to endure, at the age of fourscore, what at fifteen she, like all the fashionable world of the time, had perused without an idea of impropriety. Scott has also recorded, on the authority of his friend John Kemble, that there existed a distinct oral tradition of a conversation having passed between a lady of high rank seated in a box in the theatre, and Mr. Congreve the celebrated dramatist who was placed at some distance, which was so little fit for modern ears, that a rake of common outward decency would hardly employ such language in a brothel. Two years before the present date Horace Walpole printed, at Strawberry-hill, a small volume of *Poems* by Lady Temple, of which some are too grossly indelicate to be now reproduced. See *Grenville Correspondence*, ii. 257. And as I have frequent occasion to exhibit Walpole in the course of this volume as a critic of Goldsmith, let me here give a glimpse of him as the critic of Lady Temple. "To do real justice to these poems, they should be compared with the first thoughts and sketches of other great poets. Mr. Addison, with infinite labour, accomplished a few fine poems; but what does your ladyship think were his rough draughts?" *Risum teneatis?*



God to continue to him the use of his understanding, and proclaiming such sins of which he supposed himself guilty, that poor sober solid Thrale was fain to "lift up one hand to  
 1766. "shut his mouth," and the worthy pair bore him off, by a  
 Æt. 38. sort of kindly force, to their hospitable home. With cheerfulness, health returned after some few months; he passed a portion of the summer with them at Brighton;\* and from that time, says Murphy, Johnson became almost resident in the family. "He went occasionally to the club in Gerrard-street, but his head-quarters "were fixed at Streatham." Goldsmith had rightly foreseen how ill things were going with him, when not even a new play could induce him to attend the theatre.

In his own attendance at the theatre he was just now more zealous than ever, and had doubtless "assisted" at some recent memorable nights there. When all the world went to see Rousseau, for example, including the King and Queen; when their majesties, though Garrick exhibited all his powers in Lusignan and Lord Chalkstone, looked more at the philosopher than at the player; and when poor Mrs. Garrick, who had exalted him on a seat in her box (rewarded for her pains by his laughing at Lusignan and crying at Lord Chalkstone, not understanding a word of either), held him back by the skirts of his coat all night, in continual terror that "the recluse philosopher" would tumble over the front of the box into the pit, from his eager anxiety to show himself,†—Goldsmith could hardly have stayed away. Nor is he likely to have been absent when the Drury-lane players (with many of whom, especially Mr. and Mrs. Yates, he had now formed acquaintance)

\* It was here, or as Mrs. Thrale calls it, "at Brighthelmstone," that on the man who dipped people in the sea "seeing Mr. Johnson swim in the year 1766, 'Why sir,' says the dipper, 'you must have been a stout-hearted gentleman forty years ago.'" *Anecdotes*, 113. Another compliment of this date he always remembered with pride. I think, says Mrs. Thrale, no praise ever went so close to his heart. It was when "Mr. Hamilton called out one day, upon Brighthelmstone Downs, 'Why, Johnson "rides as well, for aught I see, as the most illiterate fellow in England.'" *Ibid*, 200-7.

† Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 296. And see a very amusing passage in Hume's *Private Correspondence*, 143-4.



made the great rally for their rival fund; and in defiance of his outlawry, Wilkes unexpectedly showed himself in the theatre, more bent on seeing Garrick's *Kitely* than keeping faith with the ministry, to whom, through Burke, he had the day before promised to go back to Paris more secretly and quickly than he had come to London.\* Least of all could Goldsmith have been absent when the last new comedy was played, of which all the town was talking still; and which seems to have this year turned his thoughts for the first time to the théâtre, with serious intention to try his own fortune there.

The *Clandestine Marriage*, the great success of the year, and for the strength and variety of its character deservedly so, had been the joint work of Colman and Garrick; whose respective shares in its authorship have been much disputed,† but now seem clear and ascertainable enough. The idea of the comedy originated with Colman, as he was looking at the first plate in Hogarth's immortal series of *Marriage à la Mode*; but he admits that it was Garrick who, on being taken into counsel, suggested that important alteration of Hogarth's "proud lord" into an amiable old ruin of a fop, descending to pin his noble decayed skirts to the frock of a tradesman's daughter, but still aspiring to the hopes and submitting to the toils of conquest, which gave to the stage its favourite Lord Ogleby. These leading ideas determined on, rough hints for the construction and conduct of the plot, of which Colman's was made public by his son three-and-thirty years ago, and Garrick's did not see the light till the other day,‡ were exchanged between the

\* *Garr. Corr.* i. 272-3.

† See *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 210-216; and a note to the latter page. See also Murphy's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 27-30; Peake's *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, i. 159-73; and Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 327-47.

‡ They were published from Garrick's MS. in the *Observer* newspaper; and, as they have not been otherwise preserved, I subjoin some noteworthy extracts. The original draft of the characters was thus sketched: "Men. GARRICK—*An old Beau, vain, &c*; YATES—*His Brother*; O'BRIEN—*Their Nephew*; KING—*An old flattering Servant of Garrick's*. Women. CLIVE—*Aunt of the Two Sisters*; BRIDE—*Elder Sister*; POPE—*The youngest, a fibbing, mischief-making girl*; BRADSHAW—*An old, flattering, toad-eater of the Aunt's*." The younger and elder sister after-

friends; and from these it is manifest that, in addition to what Colman in his letters somewhat scantily admits to have been

Garrick's contributions,—namely, the first suggestion of Lord

1766.

Æt. 33. wards changed characters, and Miss Bride gave way to Mrs. Palmer in Fanny. Subjoined are the principal points of Garrick's outline.

“ACT I. SCENE I. *Enter Bride and O'Brien.*

“Enter Bride and O'Brien (who are secretly married), complaining how unhappy she is, and how disagreeably situated she is on account of their concealing the marriage. In this scene must be artfully set forth the situation and business of the *dramatis personæ*. The audience must learn that Mrs. Clive, the aunt, has two nieces, co-heiresses, and one of them is to be married to O'Brien, the son of Garrick and nephew to Yates. They are met at the aunt's, I suppose, to see which of the young ladies will be most agreeable to the young man. (*Query*—whether there may not be a design to have a double match, the father with the aunt?) The youngest sister, Pope, and the aunt, fall in love with him, and all three pay their court to Garrick on account of his son, which he interprets as love to himself. Yates, Garrick's brother, who lives in the country—a rough, laughing, hearty fellow—is come to approve of one of the young ladies for his nephew, and to see this grand family business settled. Bride declares her distresses at seeing that her sister and aunt are in love with her husband, and that his father takes their different attentions to him for passion. She seems to think that nothing but an avowal of their marriage will set all to rights; but O'Brien gives reasons for still concealing it, and says that their future welfare depends upon keeping the secret. N.B. In this scene the characters of the two brothers, Garrick and Yates, should be told, with a hint of Garrick's flattering servant, King.

“SCENE V. *Garrick and King.*

“Garrick appears at his toilet preparing for the conquest of the day. His servant and he, by their conversation, are positive that all the females are in love with Garrick, which he readily believes and acts accordingly.

“ACT II. SCENE V. *Bride and O'Brien.*

“She is very uneasy, and cannot bear this going on, her heart is too susceptible of tenderness and jealousy: and this must be a short, matrimonial conversation, in which a delicate heart and mind must be shown; and she resolves to open her breast to Garrick, and try to bring him over to forgive them. O'Brien consents, and leaves her upon seeing Garrick come smiling along.” (The continuation of this scene is given in my text.)

“ACT III. SCENE III. *Clive and Garrick.*

“This will be a fine scene worked up, with their mutual delicacies, not to open their minds too abruptly, nor to shock each other. The upshot of it is to resolve to give consent, and determine that Clive shall have O'Brien, and Garrick Bride; and thus the scheme shall be settled, and indulge their own inclinations at the expense of all parties, when they go off, resolving to convene all the persons concerned directly.

“SCENE IV. *Pope.*

“Pope comes from behind some flowering shrubs, where she has been listening,

Ogleby, his opening love scene, and the fifth act which he closes with such handsome gallantry,—the practised actor had mapped out more clearly than Colman, though he may not have written all, the other principal scenes in which his chosen character <sup>1766.</sup> <sup>Æt. 33.</sup> was concerned.\* What he submitted for the interview where the antiquated fop supposes Fanny to have fallen in love with him, will not only exhibit this, but hereafter help us to understand some disagreements between himself and Goldsmith. “Bride,” he remarks, putting the actor always in place of the character, resolves to open her heart to Garrick, and try to bring him over to forgive them. “O’Brien consents, and leaves her upon seeing Garrick “come smiling along. Enter Garrick, he smiling, and taking “every word from the girl as love to himself. She hesitates; “falters; which confirms him more and more, till at last she is “obliged to go off abruptly, and dare not discover what she intended, which is now demonstration to Garrick, who is left alone, “and may show himself in all the glory of his character in a soliloquy of vanity. He resolves to have the girl, and break the “hearts of the rest of the female world.” Powell had to replace O’Brien, however,† and King was substituted for Garrick, before the play was acted; and out of the latter circumstance arose a coolness between the friends which will reappear in this narrative. Colman thought Garrick’s surrender of Lord Ogleby a capricious forfeiture of promise; but though an exception to his previous withdrawal from all new parts was at first intended in this case,

“and has overheard these precious persons laying their schemes and opening their “minds to each other, and seeing Yates come along she is resolved to make more “mischief.”

\* Colman’s claim is indeed cautiously worded. “In the conduct as well as dialogue “of the fourth act, I think your favourite Lord Ogleby has some obligations to me,” &c. *Garr. Corr.* i. 210. From Naples, on the Christmas Eve of 1763, Garrick had written to Colman, “What is become of your Terence? I have not yet written a “word of the fourth or fifth acts of the *Clandestine Marriage*; but I am thinking “much about it.” *Peake’s Memoirs*, i. 93.

† A great loss; for Powell’s fine gentlemen, as Goldsmith had soon too much reason to know, were very poor, and the great Lewis told Mr. Boaden (*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 170) that “O’Brien was the only actor who seemed perfectly genteel upon the “stage.”

he exercised a sound discretion in changing that purpose. The new character was, in truth, little more than an enrichment of one of his own farces, assisted by a farce of his friend Townley's; <sup>1766.</sup> and he could himself but have made Lord Ogleby an improved Lord Chalkstone. It was better left to an entirely new representative, and King justified his choice. Colman's sense of injury was, nevertheless, kept carefully alive by goodnatured friends; and when Garrick, some time after the play's production, and while the town were still crowding to see it, wrote in triumph to his coadjutor of the difficulties of the rival house ("The ministry all "to pieces! Pitt, they say, and a new arrangement. Beard and "Co. going positively to sell their patent for sixty thousand "pounds. 'Tis true; but, mum. We have not yet discovered "the purchasers. When I know, you shall know: there will be "the devil to do"),\* he little imagined what notions he was then infusing into Colman's busy discontented brain.

The unexampled success of their comedy had seemed in truth as thoroughly to have reconciled them, as it had unsettled poor Goldsmith's thoughts, and driven them, with a new hope, in the direction of the stage. This was not unnatural. The reputation of his later writings, bringing him into occasional better company, had tempted him to greater expenses while it failed to supply the means of keeping pace with them.† He was readier than ever to work hard, but the other habits rendered needfuller than ever more than all the labour they enabled him to give. There was a hint of this, as I have already said, in Hogarth's portrait of him three years ago; ‡ but not until now is the satiric touch perceived to be fully applicable. Here therefore, and now, may poor Oliver most fitly again be seen, as the great painter saw him, desperately at work, bent resolutely over his paper, but with a hand that moves

\* See this and other letters of Garrick in Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 271-310.

† Speaking of Reynolds's note-books in this year Mr. Taylor tells us (*Life*, i. 255), "There are engagements for dinners with Goldsmith, to provide which some "of Newbery's scanty payments for the *Vicar*" (there was only one) "may have "melted."

‡ See *ante*, i. 304-5.



across it perhaps not more freely because of the ruffles and rings that adorn it.\*

Yet never was there so much need that nothing should impede his pen. His accounts with Newbery were growing more and more involved; an unpaid note for fifty pounds, which he had given in settlement three years ago, began to make threatening reappearance; there had been payment of the dishonoured bill lately referred to, but his last draft upon the not unfriendly but cautious bookseller, though for only eleven guineas, had been

1766.  
Æt. 38.



dishonoured; and ordinary modes of extrication seemed more difficult and distant than ever. What wonder then that there should have flashed upon him a vision of hope from the theatre? Anxiety and pain he knew there would also be; but he was not indisposed to risk them. They could never wholly obscure the brighter side. No longer might the playhouse be called the sole seat of wit; nor could it any more be said, as in Steele's days, to bear as important relation to the manners as the bank to the

\* For permission to present this portrait, which until now has never been engraved, I am indebted to the courtesy of its owner, Studley Martin Esq. of Liverpool.

credit of the nation : but besides the tempting profits of an "an-thor's nights," which, with any reasonable success, could hardly average less than from three to four hundred pounds, there <sup>1766.</sup> was nothing to make the town half so fond of a man, even <sup>Æt. 33.</sup> yet, as a successful play. It had been the dream, too, of his own earliest ambition ; and though his juvenile tragedy had gone the way of dreams, he had now a surer and not untried ground to build upon, of humour, character, and wit. He resolved to attempt a comedy.

What, meanwhile, his leisure amusements were, since Johnson's withdrawal to the Thrales had limited their intercourse at Gerrard-street, may be worth illustrating by occasional little anecdotes of the time, though rather loosely told. He had joined a card-club, at the Devil tavern near Temple-bar, where very moderate whist was played ; and where the members seem to have occupied the intervals of their favourite game with practical jokes upon himself. Here he had happened to give a guinea instead of a shilling, one night, to the driver of a coach (after dining with Tom Davies) ; and on the following night a fictitious coachman presented himself, to restore a counterfeit guinea. It was a trick to prove that not even the honesty of a hackney coachman would be too startling a trial for Goldsmith's credulity ; and, as anticipated, the gilded coin was taken with an overflow of simple thanks, and subsequent more solid acknowledgment of the supposed marvellous honesty. Other incidents tell the same tale of credulous, unsuspecting, odd simplicity. Dr. Sleigh of Cork had asked him to be kind to a young Irish law student heretofore mentioned, who had taken chambers near his own, who was known afterwards as a writer for the newspapers, Foote's and Macklin's biographer, and, from the title of the most successful poem he published, *Conversation Cooke* ;\* and the latter, invited to apply to him in case of need, was told with earnest regrets one day, in answer to a trifling

\* See note *ante*, l. 58. In the fourth edition of his poem he introduced some sketches of the Gerrard-street club, among them Goldsmith ; and in the dedication to the same poem will be found a capital sketch of another friend of his, the author of the best detached essay ever written on Shakespeare, Maurice Morgann.

application, that he was really not at that moment in possession of a guinea. The youth turned away in less distress than Goldsmith; and, returning to his own chambers after midnight, found a difficulty in getting in. Goldsmith had meanwhile himself <sup>1766.</sup> <sub>Æt. 38.</sub> borrowed the money, followed with it too late, and thrust it, wrapped-up in paper, half underneath the door. Cooke hurried next day to thank him, and tell him what a mercy it was somebody else had not laid hold of it. "In truth, my dear fellow," said Goldsmith, "I did not think of that."\* As little did he trouble himself to think, when a French adventurer went to him towards the close of the year with proposals for a History of England in French, which was not only to be completed in fifteen volumes at the cost of seven guineas and a half, and to be paid for in advance, but to have the effect of bringing into more friendly relations the men of letters of both countries. Goldsmith, though he had been fain but a few days before this, for the humble payment of two guineas, to write Newbery a "Preface to Wiseman's Grammar,"† had no

\* The little details of this anecdote are so characteristic that I subjoin them in the words of the original narrator: "My old friend Mr. Cooke the barrister," says Mr. John Taylor, in his *Records of my Life* (Ed. 1832, i. 107-110), who brought "letters to Goldsmith from Cork, in the year 1766, used to speak of his benevolence and simplicity in the highest terms. . . Mr. Cooke had engaged to meet a party "at Marylebone Gardens, and . . . applied to his friend Goldsmith for the loan of "a guinea. Poor Goldsmith was in the same *Parnassian* predicament, but under- "took to borrow the sum of a friend, and to bring it to Cooke before he departed for "the gardens. Cooke waited in expectation to the last moment . . . but no Gold- "smith appeared. He therefore trusted to fortune, and sallied forth. Meeting some "hospitable Irish countrymen at the place, he partook of a good supper, and did not "return to his chambers till five in the morning. Finding some difficulty in open- "ing his door, he stooped to remove the impediment, and found it was the guinea "that Goldsmith had borrowed for him, wrapped in paper, which he had attempted "to thrust under the door, not observing the hole in the letter-box, obvious to every- "body else. Cooke thanked him in the course of the day, but observed that he ought "not to have exposed the sum to such danger in so critical a state of their finances, "as the laundress, coming early in the morning, or any casual stranger, might have "seized the precious deposit. . . In answer he said, 'In truth, my dear fellow, I did "not think of that.' The fact is, he probably thought of nothing but serving a "friend."

† In the same memorandum of the Newbery MSS. in which this is entered, the *Traveller* reappears; and though at first one is fain to hope that it might express a new payment for a new edition, closer examination shows that this is not so. "Mr. Newbery, Dr.—*Brookes's* 4 vols. correcting, 211; *Natural Philosophy*, 631; *Traveller*,

mean notion of the dignity of literature in regard to such proposals as this French impostor's, and now indulged it at a thoughtless cost. Straightway he gave his name, impoverished himself <sup>1766.</sup> by giving his last available guinea, and, in the "Colonel <sub>Æt. 38.</sub> "Chevalier de Champigny's" advertisements, jostling the names of crowned heads and ambassadors, figured as the "Author of the *Traveller*."\*

Pleasanter are the anecdotes which tell of his love for the young, and anxiety to have them for his readers. It was matter of pride to one with as gentle a spirit and as wise a heart, the late Charles Lamb, to remember that the old woman who taught him his letters had in her own school-girl days been patted on the head by Goldsmith. Visiting where she stayed one day, he found her reading his selection of *Poems for Young Ladies*, praised her fondness for poetry, and sent her his own poem to encourage it. The son of Hoole, Ariosto's translator, remembered a similar incident in his father's house. Other amusing traits might be added, strongly resembling such as already have been told. Booksellers would get him to recommend books, misguiding him as to the grounds of recommendation; † and though everybody had been laughing at the exaggerated accounts of Patagonians nine feet

"21l; Translation of *Philosophy*, 20l; Preface to Wiseman's *Grammar*, 2l. 2s. "[Total], 127l. 2s. June 7, 1766. OLIVER GOLDSMITH." It is in Goldsmith's handwriting, on a full sheet; and is but a duplicate of Newbery's similar memorandum, *ante*, i. 374. There is moreover, among the same papers, yet a third memorandum in which the same payment appears; and this, which is in Newbery's writing, is simply a repetition of the second, with additions of the 3l. 3s. for "Preface to the History of the World" included in the first, of a pencil note of what he had paid for the copy of the *Essays* also in the first, and of a memorandum to the effect that "The last settlement was the 11th October 1766," where the date of the year is very obviously a slip of the pen for 1763. No trace exists in the papers of any formal settlement subsequent to the 11th of October, 1763, on which day a general winding-up of accounts as between Newbery and Goldsmith took place; when the latter, besides signing a general receipt, gave special receipts as to each particular transaction (probably required for the satisfaction of other partners in the literary work so paid for), all written by himself and dated on the same day, and finally handed over to Newbery a promissory note, also dated that day, for the balance. Supposing the memorandum made, as is likely, at the close of 1765 or the opening of 1766, the mistake of the latter year for 1763 was a natural one enough.

\* *Percy Memoir*, 99, 100.

† As in the case of Blainville. See *ante*, i. 378.



high brought home by Commodore Byron's party, Goldsmith earnestly protested that he had talked with the carpenter of the commodore's ship (a "sensible, understanding man, and I "believe extremely faithful"),\* and by him had been assured, <sup>1766.</sup> <sub>Æt. 38.</sub> in the most solemn manner, of the truth of the relation. Nor was it altogether romance, though the honest carpenter made the most of what he had seen. Even the last survey of those coasts, though it does not establish the assertions of Magalhaens and Byron, leaves it certain that the Patagonians exceed the height of ordinary men, and that the believers in such a possibility were not nearly such fools as the majority too readily supposed.

\* *Animated Nature*, ii. 261. Ed. 1774. The words do not appear in the later editions.

## CHAPTER XV.

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### THE GREAT WORLD AND ITS RULERS.

1766.

THE eleventh year of Goldsmith's London struggle was now coming to a close amid strange excitement and change, which I may stop briefly to recall. Its reaction on literature and its cultivators will be seen, as, from the point at which we left him last, we follow Burke's upward ascent in the teeth of every disadvantage opposed to him. What Garrick had reported of the ministry in the summer, was in the main correct. Though it had not broken to pieces, the King had exploded it; and there was Pitt and a new "arrangement." The word was not ill chosen. Changes of ministry were now brought about without the conflict of principles or party, and by no better means than might be used for "arrangement" of the royal bed-chamber. Lord Rockingham had hardly taken office when the Duke of Cumberland's death left him defenceless against palace intrigues; and their busy fomenters, the "King's friends" whom Burke has gibbeted in his *Thoughts on Discontents*, very speedily destroyed him. His Stamp Act repeal bill, his American Trading bill, his resolution against General Warrants, and his Scizure of Papers bill, were the signal for royal favour to every creeping placeman who opposed them; and on the failure of the latter bill Grafton threw up his office, saying Pitt alone could save them. Pitt's fame as well as peace would have profited, had he consented to do that. But against his better self, the King's appeals had

enlisted his pride; and he had not strength, amid failing health, to conquer the impulse of vanity. He alone of all men, he was told, could rally the people, reunite the nobles, and save the throne; he alone, the King wrote to him, could "destroy <sup>1766.</sup> <sub>Æt. 38.</sub> "all party distinctions, and restore that subordination to "government which alone can preserve that inestimable blessing, "liberty, from degenerating into licentiousness." A wise thing, if it could have been accomplished; but a thing that was never even seriously intended.\* The system of which George the Third and Lord Bute were the inventors and Bubb Dodington the apostle, was no alliance of the throne with the people, but subordination of everything, including the great houses, to the throne. For party, the King would have substituted prerogative; for faction, despotism; for occasional corruption of the House of Commons, its entire extinction as an independent house; and, for the partial evils of a system which bound men firmly together for general public purposes, though it strengthened them sometimes for particular selfish ends, the universal treachery and falsehood of a band of reptile parasites, acknowledging no allegiance but at the palace and no service but the King's. No man better than Pitt should have known this; yet in an evil hour he consented to be Prime Minister, with the title of the Earl of Chatham.†

\* "Lord Rockingham and Dowdeswell are caressed by the king at court beyond "expression," wrote Lord Temple on the 4th May; and in June the fate of the ministry was determined. *Rockingham Memoirs*, i. 346. "Lord Rockingham himself told me," says Nicholls, "that the king never showed him such distinguished "marks of kindness as after he had secretly determined to get rid of him." *Recollections and Reflections during the Reign of George III*, i. 22 (a book well worth reading for illustrations of this kind, though inspired by the most intense and unaccountable dislike of "the Burkes"). This was a habit observable in that prince to the last, and often remarked by ministers who trusted to it and were deceived.

† "Oh!" exclaims Gray, "that foolishness of great men that sold his inestimable "diamond for a paltry peerage and pension. The very night it happened was I "swearing it was a damned lie, and never could be. But it was for want of reading "Thomas à Kempis, who knew mankind so much better than I." Gray to Wharton. *Works*, iii. 264-6. But for the best that can be said on the matter, and for a general view of existing parties written with admirable feeling and eloquence, see Macaulay's second paper on Chatham, in the *Essays*, iii. 445-542.

Rockingham retired, with hands as clean as when he entered office; without having bribed to get power, or intrigued to keep it; without asking for honour, place, or pension, for any of his friends; and with that phalanx of friends unbroken.

<sup>1766.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 38.</sup> He was then, and for some years later, the only minister since the King's accession with whom Bute had not secretly tampered, or whom the favourite had publicly opposed;\* and the one great fault of his administration had sprung from a pedantry of honour. He thought that, in taxing America, the legislature had been impolitic and wrong; but he could not bring himself to think that the legislative power of the empire was not supreme over the colonies within its rule, and that it was not *able* to tax America, as to commit any other as mad injustice. Surely, however, the very act to repeal the injustice acknowledged sufficiently the power to commit it; and to superadd a declaration of the power, was to invite its future reassertion. It might be true; but it was galling, and not necessary. It was, in the same breath, an assertion of strength with a confession of weakness, and unwisely halted half-way between conciliation and a threat. Nor did anything so much as this give George Grenville his future strength in opposition, when, with his dogged yet solid and vigorous eloquence, he continued to maintain that there was no middle course between enforcing submission or acknowledging independence. Upon this question therefore it had been that the great Chief Justice Pratt, who enjoyed Pitt's chosen confidence, and whom Rockingham had on that ground singled out for elevation to the earldom of Camden, used the privilege so generously given, resolutely to oppose the giver. The example was one, on the part of both minister and opponent, by which Pitt might of late have profited; but his noble nature had become clouded for a time. To many proffers from Lord Rockingham to serve with him, to accept him even as a leader, the only answer vouchsafed by Pitt had been a studied slight; and the only return now made by Chatham was an attempt to separate the party from its chief.

\* See Burke's "Short Account" in his *Works*, i. 207-9



This was steadily resisted. Savile, Dowdeswell, Lord John Cavendish, the Duke of Richmond, the Duke of Portland, Fitzherbert, and Charles Yorke (Burke could only refuse future office, he had none to resign), persisted in resigning office; <sup>1766.</sup> <sub>Æt. 83</sub> and the only important members of the late administration who remained, were the two whom Cumberland had induced to join it, General Conway (with whom William Burke remained as under-secretary) and the Duke of Grafton.

With these, though strongly opposed in views as well as temper, were now associated two men of remarkable talents, personal adherents of Chatham; Lord Camden as Chancellor, and Lord Shelburne as a Secretary of State: the latter a young but not untried statesman, and distinguished not merely for political ability, but also for such rare tastes and independent originality of character that men of science and letters, such men as even Goldsmith, had come to regard him as a friend. The next ingredient in the strange compound was Charles Townshend, perhaps the cleverest and certainly the most dangerous man in the whole kingdom. Admirably did Horace Walpole remark that his good-humour turned away hatred from him, but his levity intercepted love. He was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the lead of the House of Commons; and his opinions no man knew, save that they were simply the opinions of the House of Commons. He had with equal ability advocated every shade of opinion; as the majority had with equal impartiality voted the same. Burke called him the child of the House, and said he never thought, did, or spoke anything but with a view to it: that he adapted himself to its disposition every day, adjusted himself before it as a looking-glass, saw of himself only what was reflected there, and was infinitely above having any opinion apart from it. Certainly no man, for his brief reign, was ever so popular in it, or in the extravagance of his inconsistencies so nearly approached to its own. The light of his ascending star is compared, by no partial witness, to the majesty of Pitt's descending glory; nor does it seem doubtful that his later influence in debate transcended even

the great commoner's.\* But a man is not remembered in history for his mere predominance in the House of Commons; and he who exactly suits that audience, and "hits the House be-  
1766.  
Æt. 38. "tween wind and water," may be found to have lost a nobler hearing, and missed much worthier aims. Little spoken of indeed as Charles Townshend now is, it seems necessary to call to mind, when any modern writer pauses at his once famous name, that as well in the copious abundance of his faults as the wonderful brilliancy of his parts he had far outstripped competition; and must have ranked, even beyond the circle of his contemporaries, for the most knowing man of their age, but for his ignorance of "common truth, common sincerity, common honesty, common modesty, common steadiness, common courage, and common sense."† Wanting these qualities, and having every other in surprising abundance, he most thoroughly completed the charm of powerful trouble which Chatham was now preparing; and in which every shade of patriot and courtier, King's friend and republican, tory and whig, treacherous ally and open enemy, were at length most ingeniously united. Nobody knew anybody in this memorable cabinet, and all its members hated each other. Soon did even its author turn sullenly away from the monstrous prodigy he had created, and leave it to work its mischief unrestrained.

Poor Conway first took the alarm, and got the Duke of Grafton to urge the necessity of having some one in the lower House, on whom real reliance could be placed. There will be "a strong phalanx of able personages against us," he said; "and among those whom Mr. Conway wishes to see support him, is Mr. Burke, the readiest man on all points perhaps in the whole house."

\* Curious incidental notices of Townshend will be found in the *Autobiography* of Jupiter Carlyle, who first met him as a fellow-student in Leyden. I may now also refer the reader to *Charles Townshend, Poet and Statesman*, a volume lately published by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald.

† Walpole's *George III.* lii. 102. A view of these affairs somewhat differing from that which I have taken, but very masterly, has been interwoven by Lord John Russell with the *Memorials of Fox*, i. 111-22.

Burke had been a member little more than six months when this was written; yet, even among the men who thus felt his usefulness, there was as little idea of recognising his claim to an office of any importance, as of offering to make him prime minister. His own wish had been, as soon as it became certain that the Rockinghams must resign, to obtain an appointment which happened then to be vacant, and to have held which, however quickly surrendered, would have increased his parliamentary consideration; but he failed in the attempt, and was styled, by the vehement Bishop of Chester, nothing short of a "madman" to have made it. "Here is an Irishman" wrote Colonel Lee\* in the following month to the Prince Royal of Poland, "sprung up in the House of Commons, who has astonished everybody by the power of his eloquence, and his comprehensive knowledge in all our exterior and internal politics, and commercial interests. He wants nothing but that sort of dignity annexed to rank and property in England, to make him the most considerable man in the lower house." Wanting that, however, he wanted all, so far as office was concerned. Well might Walpole say that the narrowness of his fortune kept him down. The great families disowned him.† Not many weeks after this letter was written, the amiable but irresolute Conway himself (from whose

1766.  
Æt. 38.

\* Lee's commission of General was given him by Washington, whose service he entered, with Walpole's godson Gates, and other Englishmen, in the first campaign for independence. For a memoir of him see Sir Henry Bunbury's *Hanmer Correspondence*, 453-80.

† One exception let me make at once, and in a family at this time bitterly opposed to the line Burke had taken. Charles Fox was now but a lad of seventeen, who had scarcely quitted Oxford, yet we have evidence in his letters to Macartney that already he was in friendly intercourse with Burke; just as we ascertain, from his letters to the same correspondent, that while yet at college, and hardly sixteen, he had discovered that *The Traveller* was the only thing worth reading in the current literature of the day, and praised it accordingly. The true heart, from whatever confused environments, will be always found in one form or other pulsating to the true. "If there were any way of sending you," writes Charles Fox in February 1765 to Macartney, then in Russia, "I would send you a new poem called *The Traveller*, which appears to me to have a great deal of merit. I do not know anything else that I could advise you to read if you were here." Lord John Russell's *Memorials of Fox*, i. 20; and for allusion to Burke, i. 26, &c.

service, greatly to his honour, William Burke soon afterwards retired and was replaced by David Hume), irritated by his predominance, jeered at him in public debate as "an Irish adventurer:" though, within a month, seventy-seven Lancaster merchants had publicly thanked him for his strenuous efforts to relieve the burdens on trade and commerce; and Grafton had even gone so far as to urge upon Chatham, that he looked upon it he was a most material man to gain, even at the price of some office a trifle higher than that of a lordship at the Board of Trade.\* The attempt was made, and failed; and it was well that it did so. It was well that when America again was taxed, Burke should have been free to enter his protest against it; that when the public liberties were again invaded, Burke should have had the power to defend them; that when the elective franchise was trampled under foot, and five several free elections were counted void, Burke, amid even some defection of his friends, should have had the freedom, as he had the courage, to proclaim the constitution violated, and allegiance endangered; that when Townshend began to make public ridicule of his colleagues, and raise the laugh of the House of Commons against the Graftons and Conways, Burke should have met him with a wit as keen as his own, and a laugh more likely to endure; and that throughout those counter-intrigues into which the palace intrigues now drove the great families, which would have shamed the morality of the highway, and which engaged the three "gangs" of the Bedfords, the Temple-Grenvilles, and the Court, in a profligate and desperate conflict of venality, rapacity, and falsehood, Burke and the Rockinghams should have held aloof, and escaped contamination of the baseness that so rode at the top of the world.

What chance had quiet or lofty literature of attention or success, amid such scenes and struggles as thus disgraced and lowered

\* "If I mistake not, he was offered the Board of Trade during the last year, and declined it, aiming at a higher Board, or some equivalent. I cannot help saying that I look upon it that he is a most material man to gain, and one on whom the "thoroughest dependence may be given" where an obligation is owed." Duke of Grafton to the Earl of Chatham, Oct. 17, 1766. *Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 111.



the public men of England? What hope of hearing or consideration could fall to its professors from the class that should have led the nation, when, instead of leading it, they were but offering it high examples of venality and falsehood? What possibility now existed of any kind of reward for those who had dignified their calling, and snatched it from the servitude it had so long lain under? By such labours as Johnson's had been, and as Goldsmith's continued to be, they had provided for another generation of writers, if not for themselves, surer friends and better paymasters than either patron or publisher; nor was it possible for men of letters again to become, what Sir Robert Walpole made and would have kept them. Never again with abject servility, as Goldsmith, imitating Swift, pithily expresses it, could they

"importune his Grace,  
Nor ever cringe to men in place,  
Nor undertake a dirty job,  
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob;"

but what had been the effect of the change on Walpole's successors, the ministers and governors of the nation? Had they stooped to pick up the hack-livery which the Goldsmiths had flung down, and put it on to serve themselves? It seemed so. No other interest did they appear to take in the uses of literature but as a vast engine of libel, available only for the sordid trafficking, the shameless corruption, the servile submission, which in turn ruled all the factions. George Grenville had used it, to assail Conway and the Rockinghams; two new-made deans resorted to it, to uphold their patron Grafton; parson Scott had made a firebrand of it, to fling destruction at the enemies of Sandwich; Lord Temple had not scrupled to employ it, for the purpose of blackening his brother and his brother-in-law; and it had helped the unblushing Rigby to show, by jovial abuse of everybody all round, how entirely and exclusively he was his grace the Duke of Bedford's, her grace the Duchess's, and the whole house of Woburn's.\* Every month, every week, had its periodical calumny. The unwieldy column

\* See Walpole's *George III.*, iii. 115.

of quarto and octavo, the light squadron of pamphlet and flying sheet, alike kept up the fire. "Faction only fills the town with pamphlets," wrote Johnson soon after this date,\* "and  
 1766.  
 Æt. 38. "greater subjects are forgotten in the noise of discord."  
 "Politics and abuse," confesses one † who stood behind the scenes, "have totally corrupted our taste. We might as well be given up to controversial divinity. Nobody thinks of writing a line that is to last beyond the next fortnight;" or of listening, he might have added, to a line so written. The same authority, a politician and man of rank, left an account of the literature of the day, in which half a line is given to Goldsmith as "the correct author of the *Traveller*," ‡ another to Smollett as a profligate hireling and abusive Jacobite writer, and a third to Johnson as a lumber of mean opinions and prostituted learning: but in which Mrs. Macauley's *History* is compared to Robertson's, Mr. Richard Bentley's *Patriotism* thought next in merit to the *Dunciad*, and Mr. Dalrymple's *Rodondo* counted hardly inferior to *Hudibras*; in which Mr. Hoole is discovered to be a poet, and an elegant five-shilling quarto which had appeared within the last few months with the title of the *New Bath Guide* is proclaimed to have distinguished and marked out its writer from all other men, for possession of the easiest wit, the most genuine humour, the most inoffensive satire, the most unaffected poetry, and the most harmonious melody in every kind of metre. §

\* *Boswell*, iii. 244. † Horace Walpole to Conway. *Coll. Lett.* v. 263.

‡ Walpole couples Goldsmith with Anstey, as both "poets of great merit" who "meddled not with politics." *Mem. Geo. III*, iii. 172. Some account of the pamphleteers and party writers of this and the next few years will be found in Stephens's *Life of Korne Tooke*, i. 352-60; but to be taken *cum grano*.

§ See Chapter "on the Literature of the early part of the Reign," in Horace Walpole's *Memoirs of the Reign of George III*, iii. 164. I need not perhaps remind the reader that in the brief space of time of which Walpole thus professes to sketch the distinguishing literature, all Sterne's writings had been produced, the best of Smollett's, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Letters*; that, not to mention the *Idler* or the *Vicar of Wakefield*, Johnson had published his edition of *Shakespeare*, Percy his *Reliques*, and Reid his *Inquiry*; and that some of Foote's best farces had been acted, with Colman's *Jealous Wife* and the *Clandestine Marriage*. Not a word does Walpole vouchsafe to any of them. Omitting some hesitating praise to Churchill, some abuse of Wilkes, a mention as Franklin's of the Farmer's *Letters from Penn-*

Is not the fashion as well as faction of the time thus reflected to us vividly? Now, all excepting Christopher Anstey are forgotten, of these admired ones; nor is it likely that even Anstey would have been noticed with anything but a sneer, if, besides being <sup>1708.</sup> a scholar and a wit, he had not also been a member of Parlia- <sup>Æt. 38.</sup> ment. Beyond the benches of the Houses, too, or the gossip of St. James's, this influence reached. It was social rank that had helped Anstey, for this poem of the *New Bath Guide*, to no less a sum than two hundred pounds; it was because Goldsmith had no other rank than as a man of letters, depressed and at that time very slowly rising, that his *Traveller* had obtained for him only twenty guineas. Even David Hume, though now accepted into the higher circles, undisturbed any longer by the "factious barbarians," and somewhat purified of late from history and philosophy by employment as under-secretary of state, had not lost that painful sense of the social differences between Paris and London which he expressed twelve months before the present date. "If a man have the "misfortune in London to attach himself to letters, even if he

*sylvania* which were not Franklin's, and a few words to *Ossian*, place is given in the text to all he thinks worthy of mention; except that, in a subsequent part of the *Memoirs* (iv. 328), he has the inconceivable bad taste to characterise the delightful *Humphrey Clinker* as "a party novel, written by the profligate hireling Smollett to "vindicate the Scots and cry down juries!" I may add that, in the same complimentary spirit, in a letter to Mason dated 21st July, 1772, he thus, after sneering at Garrick, Sir William Chambers, Sir John Dalrymple, and Lord Lyttelton, sums up the literary glories of the age: "What a library of poetry, taste, good sense, veracity, "and vivacity! ungrateful Shebbeare! indolent Smollett! trifling Johnson! piddling "Goldsmith! how little have they contributed to the glory of a period in which all "arts, all sciences, are encouraged and rewarded." Mitford's *Correspondence of Walpole and Mason*, i. 32. "Indolent" in this passage is, I doubt not, a misprint for "insolent;" for these letters do not appear to have been corrected at all as they went through the press. As I have touched upon the subject, it may perhaps be worth quoting another of Walpole's querulous complainings as to the utter absence of all merit in the age, its literature, history, poetry, eloquence, morality, and statesmanship, since it contains the germ of a more famous and felicitous passage by a celebrated living writer. (1852). "For my part, I take Europe to be worn out. When "Voltaire dies, we may say, 'Good night!' . . . The next Augustan age will dawn "on the other side of the Atlantic. There will, perhaps, be a Thucydides at Boston, "a Xenophon at New York, and, in time, a Virgil at Mexico, and a Newton at Peru. "At last, some curious traveller from Lima will visit England, and give a description "of the ruins of St. Paul's, like the editions of Balbec and Palmyra." *Letters to Mann*, ii. 297-301.



“succeeds, I know not with whom he is to live, nor how he is to pass his time in a suitable society. The little company there, that is worth conversing with, are cold and unsociable, or  
 1766. “are warmed only by faction and cabal; so that a man who  
 Æt. 38. “plays no part in public affairs becomes altogether insignificant, and if he is not rich, he becomes even contemptible. . . .  
 “But in Paris a man that distinguishes himself in letters, meets immediately with regard and attention.”\* He complains in another letter that the best company in London are in a flame of politics; and he declines an introduction to Mr. Percy because it would be impracticable for him to cultivate his friendship, as men of letters have in London no place of rendezvous, and are indeed “sunk and forgot in the general torrent of the world.”† Only one such man there was who would *not* be so sunk and forgot; his own unluckily chosen protégé Rousseau. That horrible English habit of indifference, Jean Jacques conceived to be a conspiracy to destroy him (for how could he live without being talked about?); and straightway he managed so to conduct himself that the friend who but a short twelve months before had called him a Socrates,‡ and praised his mildness, modesty, gentleness, and goodnature, declared him now to have become a compound of whim, affectation, wickedness, vanity, inquietude, madness, ingratitude, ferocity, and lying,§ as well as “the blackest and most atrocious

\* Burton's *Life of Hume*, ii. 268.

† Burton, ii. 385.

‡ So Hume had written to Blair in December 1765, and to Madame de Boufflers in January 1766 (*Private Correspondence*, 130), with the reservation that his friend suffered by the comparison. And see Warburton's *Letters*, 386-7.

§ So wrote Hume to Adam Smith in October 1766. The reader will find more than enough of this quarrel in the fifth volume of Walpole's *Letters*; in the *Private Correspondence of Hume* (4to. 1820), particularly at pp. 142-67, 169-208, and 212-230; in the 2nd vol. (295-380) of Mr. Burton's *Life of Hume*; in the same editor's *Letters of Eminent Persons to Hume* (1849), *passim*; and in the preface to Hume's *Philosophical Works* (Ed. 1825, i. xxix-cxix): but the most brief and compact account of Hume's conduct in it, with a very pleasing sketch of his general character, is, I think, in Hardy's *Life of Lord Charlemont*, 120-124. I may add that, a year or two after his return to France, Rousseau admitted that he had been to blame in the quarrel, and characteristically ascribed it to a mental affliction produced by the foggy climate of England. See Brougham's *Men of Letters of George III.*, i. 231. The same thing is repeated in other terms in Hume's *Private Correspondence*, 225-6, 241-2, and 246.

"villain beyond comparison that now exists in the world." For he had first indicted Hume as the leader of the conspiracy, and brought him forward to answer the indictment in the *St. James's Chronicle*; and next had fallen foul of Horace Walpole <sup>1766.</sup> as Hume's supposed vicious instrument, Bishop Warburton <sup>Æt. 33.</sup> crying all the while with delight to see "so seraphic a madman" attack "so insufferable a coxcomb." Nothing of a literary sort indeed made so much noise or amusement at the close of the year as the mad libels of Rousseau, and the caricatures\* issued of them: unless it were the newspaper cross readings, which, with the witty signature of a real name, *Papyrius Cursor*, that rendered its aptness so whimsical, Caleb Whitefoord published in December (wherein the public were informed that "this morning the Rt. Hon. the Speaker was convicted of keeping a disorderly house," that "Lord Chatham took his seat and was severely handled by "the populace," and that "yesterday Doctor Jones preached at St. James's and performed it with ease in less than fifteen minutes," with other as surprising items of information), and at which the town is described to have wept with laughter.† Goldsmith envied nothing so much, we are assured, as the authorship of this humorous sally; and would gladly have exchanged for it his own most successful writings.‡ Half sad, and half satirical, perhaps he thus contrasted its reception with theirs.

The young German student to whom allusion has been made, speaking from his judgment of the book that so enchanted him, had thought its author must have reason "thankfully to acknowledge he was an Englishman, and to reckon highly the advantages which his country and nation afforded him." But would Goethe without limitation have said this, if there had lain before him the two entries from a bookseller's papers wherewith the

\* "There is even a print engraved of it," writes Hume to the Countess de Boufflers. "M. Rousseau is represented as a Yahoo, newly caught in the woods; "I am represented as a farmer, who caresses him and offers him some oats to eat, "which he refuses in a rage; Voltaire and d'Alembert are whipping him up behind; "and Horace Walpole making him horns of *papier maché*. The idea is not altogether "absurd." *Priv. Cor.* 234.

† *Coll. Lett.* v. 175.

‡ *Northcote's Life of Reynolds*, i. 217.

biographer of the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* must close the year 1766 and open the year 1767? "Received from Mr.

"Newbery," says the first, dated the 28th of December, 1766. "five guineas for writing a short English grammar. OLIVER

Æt. 39. "GOLDSMITH." "To cash," says the second, dated the 6th "of January, lent Dr. Goldsmith one pound one. JOHN NEWBERY."\*

\* "Received from Mr. Newbery five guineas for writing a short English grammar. "OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Decr. 28, 1766." "Dr. Goldsmith. Dr. To Cash lent "Jan. 6, 1767, 1*l.* 1*s.* 0*d.*" *Newbery MSS.*

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THEATRES ROYAL COVENT-GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

1767.

THE opening, then, of the twelfth year of Oliver Goldsmith's career as a man of letters, which finds him author of the *Citizen of the World*, the *Traveller*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield*, finds him also writing a short English grammar for five <sup>1767.</sup> guineas, and borrowing of his publisher the sum of one <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> pound one. But thus scantily eking out his necessities with hack employment and parsimonious lendings, his dramatic labour had meanwhile been in progress. The venture I have described as in the dawn, was now about to struggle into day. He had taken for his model the older English comedy. He thought Congreve's astonishing wit too exuberant for the stage; and for truth to nature, vivacity, life, and spirit, placed Farquhar first. With what was called the genteel or sentimental school that had since prevailed, and of which Steele was the originator, he felt no sympathy; and cared chiefly for the *Jealous Wife* and the *Clandestine Marriage* because they had shown the power to break through those trammels. What his countryman Farquhar had done, he resolved to attempt; and in that hearty hope had planned his play. With the help of nature, humour, and character, should these be in his reach, he would invoke the spirit of laughter, happy, unrestrained, and cordial: all the more surely, as he reckoned, if with Garrick's help, and King's, and Yates's; though without them, if so compelled. For not in their names, or after



Garriek's fashion, had he set down his exits and entrances,\* nor to suit peculiarities of theirs were his mirthful incidents devised.

Upon no stage picture of the humorous, however vivid,  
 1767.  
 Æt. 39. but upon what he had seen and known, himself, of the humorous in actual life, he was determined to venture all; believing that what was real in manners, however broad or low, if in decency endurable and pointing to no illiberal moral, could never be justly condemned as vulgar. And for this he had Johnson's approval. Indifferent to nothing that affected his friend, nor ever sluggish where help was wanted or active kindness needed to be done, Johnson promised to write a prologue to the comedy. For again had he lately shown himself in Gerrard-street; again had the club reunited its members; and, once more in the society of Reynolds, Johnson, and Burke, Goldsmith was eager to forget his carking poverty, and to count up his growing pretensions to greatness and esteem.

What Boswell calls "one of the most remarkable incidents of "Johnson's life," was now matter of conversation at the club. In February, the King had taken occasion to see and hold some conversation with him on one of his visits to the royal library, where by permission of the librarian he frequently consulted books. The effect produced by the incident is a social curiosity of the time. Endless was the interest of it; the marvel of it never to be done with. "He loved to relate it with all its circumstances," says Boswell, "when requested by his friends:" and "Come now, sir, "this is an interesting matter; do favour us with it," was the cry of every friend in turn. So, often was the story repeated. How the King had asked Johnson if he was then writing anything, and he had answered he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to acquire more knowledge. How the King said he did not think Johnson borrowed much from anybody; and the other venturing to think he had done his part as a writer, was handsomely assured "I would have thought

\* See ante, 7-8. And for a strong condemnation of the practice, see the *Citizen of the World*, Letter lxxix.

“so too, if you had not written so well.” How his majesty next observed that he supposed he must already have read a great deal, to which Johnson replied that he thought more than he read, and for instance had not read much, compared with <sup>1759.</sup> ~~Æt.~~ 89. Dr. Warburton; whereto the King rejoined that he heard Dr. Warburton was a man of such general knowledge that his learning resembled Garrick’s acting in its universality. How his majesty afterwards asked if there were any other literary journals published in the kingdom, except the *Monthly Review* and *Critical Review*, and being told there was no other, inquired which of them was best; whereupon Johnson replied that the *Monthly Review* was done with most care, and the *Critical* upon the best principles, for that the authors of the *Monthly* were enemies to the church: which the King said he was sorry to hear. How his majesty talked of the university libraries, of Sir John Hill’s veracity, and of Lord Lyttelton’s history; and how he proposed that the literary biography of the country should be undertaken by Johnson, who thereupon signified his readiness to comply with the royal wishes (of which he never heard another syllable). How, during the whole of the interview, to use the description given to Boswell by the librarian, Johnson talked to his majesty with profound respect, but still in his firm manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room. And how, at the end of it, the flattered sage protested that the manners of the bucolic young sovereign, “let them talk of them as they will,” were those of as fine a gentleman as Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second could have been.\* “Ah!” said the charmed and charming Sévigné, when *her* King had danced with her, “c’est le plus grand roi du monde!”

“And did you say *nothing*, sir,” asked one of the circle who stood round Johnson at Mr. Reynolds’s when he detailed the interview there, “to the King’s high compliment on your writing?” “No, sir,” answered Johnson, with admirable taste. “When the

\* Boswell, iii. 22-27.

“King had said it, it was to be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my Sovereign.” Highly characteristic of him was what he added as his opinion of the advantage of <sup>1761.</sup> such an interview. “I found,” he said, in answer to the <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> frank and lively questioning of Joseph Warton, “his majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his Sovereign. “In the first place *a man cannot be in a passion—*” \* Here he was stopped ; but he had said enough. The consciousness of his own too frequent habit of roaring down an adversary in conversation, from which such men as the Wartons as well as Goldsmith suffered, could hardly have been more amusingly confessed ; and it is possible that Joseph Warton may have remembered it in the courteous severity of his retort, when Johnson so fiercely fell upon him at Reynolds’s a few years later. “Sir, I am not used to be contradicted.” “Better for yourself and friends, sir, if you were. Our admiration could not be increased, but our love might.” †

One of the listeners standing near Johnson, when he began his narrative, had, during the course of it, silently retreated from the circle. “Doctor Goldsmith,” says Boswell, “remained unmoved upon a sofa at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention, that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a Prologue to his play, with the hopes of which he had been flattered ; but it was strongly suspected that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honour Doctor Johnson had lately enjoyed. At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprung from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter, from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed, “ ‘ Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I

\* Boswell, iii. 27.

† Woolf's *Biographical Memoirs of Joseph Warton*, 93.

“ ‘should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered  
 “ ‘through the whole of it.’ ”

Poor Goldsmith might have reason to be anxious about his prologue, for his play had brought him nothing but anxiety. <sup>1767.</sup>  
*In theatro sedet atra cura.* A letter lies before me from <sup>Æt. 39.</sup>  
 Horace Walpole's neighbour, Kitty Clive, who writes expressively though she spells ill (the great Mrs. Pritchard used to talk of her “gownd”),\* assuring her friend Colman that “vexation and  
 “fretting in a theater are the foundation of all Billous complaints.  
 “I speak by expeariance. I have been fretted by managers till  
 “my gaul has overflow'd like the river Nilo;” and precisely thus it befell Goldsmith. His comedy completed, Kitty's “billous” complaint began; and there was soon an overflow of gall. Matters could not have fallen out worse for any chance of advantageous approach to Garrick, and the new dramatist's thoughts, therefore, turned at first to the other house. While the play was in progress it was undoubtedly intended for Beard. But Covent-garden theatre was in such confusion from Rich's death, and Beard's doubts and deafness, that Goldsmith resolved to make trial of Garrick. They do not seem to have met since their first luckless

\* So Johnson told Mrs. Siddons; “but,” he added, “when she appeared upon  
 “the stage she seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding.” *Boswell*,  
 viii. 238. Perhaps he connected her uneasily with his recollections of *Irene*; but  
 there seems to have been a downright sincerity and passion in her acting, whether  
 of comedy or tragedy, which her audiences could not resist:

“Before such merits all objections fly,  
 Pritchard's genteel.”. .

Nor can I believe, from the accounts which exist of her extraordinary powers, that Johnson is not in error when he stated on another occasion that “she had never read  
 “the tragedy of *Macbeth* all through.” *Bos.* v. 293. One would hardly suppose from her letters that Mrs. Clive was much of a scholar; yet it was her wit and sense off the stage that charmed Johnson even more than her unrivalled genius upon it. Langton tells us he was very easy and facetious with the players in the old days of *Irene*, and used to talk with Mrs. Clive more than with any of them. He said, “Clive, sir, is a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say.” And she said in turn of him, “I love to sit by Dr. Johnson; he always entertains me.” vii. 355. Many years later, he told George Steevens “At that period, sir, all the  
 “wenches knew me, and dropped me a curtsy, as they passed on to the stage.  
 “But since poor Goldsmith's last comedy, I scarce recollect having seen the inside  
 “of a playhouse.” *Johnsoniana* in *Boswell*, ix. 196.



meeting, but Reynolds now interposed to bring them together ; and at the painter's house in Leicester-square Goldsmith placed in Garrick's hands the manuscript of the *Good-Natured Man*. Tom <sup>1767.</sup> Davies was afterwards at some pains to describe what he <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> conceived to have been the tenor of their interview, and tells us that the manager, being at all times fully conscious of his own merit, was perhaps more ostentatious of his abilities to serve a dramatic author than became a man of his prudence, while the poet, on his side, was as fully persuaded of his own importance and independent greatness. Mr. Garrick expected "that the writer " would esteem the patronage of his play as a favour," but "Goldsmith rejected all ideas of kindness in a bargain that was intended to be of mutual advantage to both parties."\* Both were in error, and providing cares and bitterness for each other ; of which the heaviest portion fell naturally on the weakest shoulders. Mere pride must always be injurious to all men ; but where it cannot itself afford that the very claim it sets up should succeed, deplorable indeed is its humiliation.

Let us admit that, in this matter of patronage, the poet might not improperly have consented at the first, to what with an ill grace he was driven to consent at last. He was possibly too eager to visit upon the actor his resentment of the want of another kind of patronage ; and to interpose uneasy remembrances of a former quarrel, before what should have been a real sense of what was due to Garrick, and a proper concession of it.† Johnson had no love of patronage, but he would not have counselled this. Often, when most bitter on the same angry theme, and venting with the least scruple his rage at the actor's foppery, would he stop to remind himself of the consideration Garrick needed after all, and of how little in reality he assumed. For then, all generous and tolerant as at heart Johnson was, not a merit or advantage of his

\* *Life of Garrick*, ii. 153.

† It was doubtless with a relation to this matter Goldsmith had remarked to Reynolds that "he could not suffer such airs of superiority from one who was only a "poor player," which the kindly Reynolds so quietly rebuked: "No, no, don't say "that; he is no *poor* player, surely." *Northcote's Life*, i. 287.

fellow-townsmen's unexampled success, since the day they entered London together with fourpence between them,\* but would rise and plead in his behalf. The popular actor's intercourse with the great,† his absolute control of crowds of dependants, his <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> sprightliness as a writer and talker equalled by few, his immense acquired wealth, the elevation and social esteem he had conferred upon his calling, and the applause he had for ever had sounded in his ears, and dashed in his face; all would in succession array themselves in Johnson's mind, till he was fain to protest, philosopher as he was, that if all that had happened to *him*, if lords and ladies had flattered him, if sovereigns and statesmen had petted him, and if the public had adored him, he must have had a couple of fellows with long poles continually walking before him to knock down everybody that stood in the way. "Consider, sir, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon. "Yet," he added smiling, "Garrick speaks to us."‡ The conde-

\* "He and another neighbour of mine, one Mr. Johnson, set out this morning for London together: Davy Garrick to be with you early the next week; and Mr. Johnson to try his fate with a tragedy, and to see to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or the French. Johnson is a very good scholar and poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy writer." So wrote Gilbert Walmesley "to the Rev. Mr. Colson, at his house in Rochester, Kent," from Lichfield on the 2nd March, 1736-7. Johnson and Garrick arrived together in London on the 9th March. It was Dr. Barnard (Bishop of Killaloe) who told Boswell the anecdote referred to in the text. At a dinner where himself and Garrick were present, Johnson, fixing a date, remarked, "That was the year when I came to London with twopence-halfpenny in my pocket." Garrick overhearing him, exclaimed, "Eh? what do you say? with twopence-halfpenny in your pocket?" JOHNSON: "Why, yes; when I came with twopence-halfpenny in my pocket, and thou, Davy, with three-halfpence in thine." *Life*, i. 110.

† For one of his parties at Hampton, described by Horace Walpole, see *ante*, i. 262-3. Admirably did Johnson say, on another occasion, when Wilkes was attacking Garrick in the year after his death as a man who had no friend, "I believe he is right, sir. Οἱ φίλοι, οὐ φίλος—he had friends, but no friend. Garrick was so diffused, he had no man to whom he wished to unbosom himself. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that always for the same thing: so he saw life with great uniformity. Garrick," he continued, "was a very good man, the cheerfullest man of his age; a decent liver in a profession which is supposed to give indulgence to licentiousness; and a man who gave away freely money acquired by himself." *Boswell*, vii. 261-2.

‡ *Boswell*, vii. 98-100. On the same occasion Johnson asserted Garrick's liberality and charity, though he added, "With his domestic saving we have nothing to do.



scension of patronage was at least a very harmless long pole, and Goldsmith might have taken a few taps from it. A mere sensitive though clever thinker like Hans Andersen, fretting behind the <sup>1767.</sup> scenes, will talk of an actor putting himself in one scale and <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> all the rest of the world in another; but a profoundly just man like Goethe, wise in a theatre as everywhere else, will show you that the actor's love of admiration is a part of his means to please, and that he is nothing if he seem not something to himself and others. Not to be omitted, at the same time, and not to be palliated, is Garrick's large share of blame in this special instance. His first professions should not have merged, as they did, into excuses and delays; but should have taken, either way, a decisive tone. Keeping up fair words of success to Goldsmith, it would seem he gave private assurances to Johnson and Reynolds that the comedy could not possibly succeed. Interviews followed at his own house; explanations, and proposals for alteration; doubtful acquiescence, and doubtful withdrawal of it. Matters stood thus, the season meanwhile passing to its close, when Goldsmith, whose wants had never been so urgent, and whose immediate chances of relieving them had been lost through Garrick's delays, thought himself justified in asking the manager to advance him a small sum upon a note of one of the Newberys. Garrick had at this time renewed his promise to act the play; and was in all probability very glad to lend the money, and profit by what advantage it might offer him. It is certain that soon afterwards he suggested to the luckless dramatist, as essential to his success, a series of important alterations which were at once and with some indignation rejected.

The leading characters in the piece were three; and are understood to remain, at present, much as when they left Garrick's hands. In Honeywood, who gives the comedy its title,\* we have

"I remember drinking tea with him long ago, when Peg Woffington made it, and "he grumbled at her for making it too strong. He had then begun to feel money "in his purse, and did not know when he should have enough of it." When he told the same story to Reynolds, he said that Garrick's expostulation to Peg about the tea was in these words, "Why, it is as red as blood!" And see *ante*, i. 403.

\* *The Good-Natured Man*. It is not uninteresting that, apparently quite un-

occasional conscious glance, not to be mistaken, at the writer's own infirmities. Nor is there any disposition to make light of them. Perhaps the errors which arise from easiness of disposition, and tend to unintentional confusions of right and wrong, <sup>1767.</sup> have never been touched with a happier severity. Splendid as <sub>Æt. 39.</sub>

known to Goldsmith, Fielding should have written a comedy with this precise title a few years before his death. It was the last of his performances for the stage, and its history is rather curious. It was of course handed by Fielding to Garrick, who appears to have asked Sir Charles Hanbury Williams to read it; and on Sir Charles accepting the mission to Russia, the manuscript accompanied him to those inhospitable parts. Meanwhile Garrick had forgotten all about it; the great novelist was dead; and to the inquiries of his brother and friends, who found allusions to it in his papers and wished to recover it, the Drury-lane manager could give no satisfactory clue. But after nearly twenty years, Garrick was asked to look at a tattered and much injured MS. comedy which Sir Charles Williams was supposed to have written, and had not read a page when he jumped out of his chair with the delighted exclamation, "Why, 'this is Harry Fielding's lost comedy!'" This was two years after Goldsmith's death. In the following year, with alterations by himself and Sheridan, and with one of his prologues full of witty and genial allusion to Fielding's immortal novels, the comedy was acted with only moderate success; but Goldsmith having meanwhile appropriated the chief title, it was called *The Fathers, or, the Good-Natured Man*, and so appears in Murphy's edition of Fielding. Connected with it, I regret to add, a bitter dispute arose between Sir John Fielding and Garrick, among whose unpublished papers I find several allusions to it. For example, one of Sir John Fielding's angriest letters is thus endorsed, in Garrick's handwriting: "The beginning of my 'correspondence with Sir John Fielding was thus. His brother, the late Mr. 'Fielding, was my particular Friend; he had written a Comedy called the *Good-Natured Man*, which, being lent to his different friends, was lost for twenty years. 'It luckily fell to my lot to discover it. Had I found a mine of gold upon my own 'land, it could not have given me more pleasure. I immediately went to his brother, 'Sir John, and told him the story of my discovery, and immediately with all the 'warmth imaginable offered my services to prepare it for the Stage. He thanked 'me cordially and we parted with mutual expressions of kindness." To this I will add the concluding passages (on the whole very honourable to Garrick) of the letter with which he met Sir John's most petulant explosion. The allusion to "the innocent" is to the family of the great novelist, for whose benefit the comedy was to be put on the stage. "We will if you please not be the trumpets of our own virtues (as 'Shakespeare says), but take care that the innocent do not suffer by our mistakes. 'There shall be no Anathema denounced against them by me. If my thoughts and 'alteration of the plan of the *Good-Natured Man* will be of the least service to their 'welfare, I will go on with my scribbling with pleasure; though my health is at present 'so precarious that I am really afraid to undertake the whole (for much is wanted) 'lest the business should be retarded by my leaving London or the kingdom. What 'could you possibly mean by saying that the mischief to the poor innocent family 'would not be so great as my anger teaches me to believe? Surely these, Sir John, 'were the dictates of *your* anger and not *mine*; and I will venture to say that now it 'is passed you are sorry that you said it, as barbarity is as great a stranger to my 'nature as falsehood is to yours. If you have obliged and honored me I thank you:

they seem, and borrowing still the name from some neighbouring duty, they are shown for what they really are; and not all our liking for goodnature, nor all the mirth it gives us in this comedy, can prevent our seeing, with its help, that there is a charity which may be a great injustice, a sort of benevolence for which weakness would be the better name, and friendship that may be nothing but credulity. In Croaker we have the contrast and foil to this, and one of the best drawn characters of modern comedy. In the way of wit, Wycherly and Congreve have done few things better; and Farquhar himself could not have surpassed the heartiness of it, or thrown into the croaking a more unctuous enjoyment. We feel it to be a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with Croaker. His friend Dick Doleful was quite right when he discovered that he rhymed to joker. The *Rambler's* brief sketch of "Suspirius 'the screech-owl'" supplied some hints for the character;\* but the

"that you never were in the way to be obliged by me is certain, or I should certainly 'have done it. Some reciprocal acts of kindness passed between your Brother and 'me too trifling to be mentioned—but his praise is fame. You might have guessed 'at my warmth to you and yours, by the pleasure I had in the discovery of the lost 'treasure. What you have said kindly, I will remember; what unkindly, I will forget. 'I will not say Farewell. D. GARRICK." In another letter, less goodnatured, and which on better thoughts Garrick appears to have withheld, the actor ridicules the angry magistrate's style of passing from the third to the first person in his letters. He does not appear to have known that this was an ordinary habit with Sir John. See *Grenville Correspondence*, ii. 366-7.

\* "Johnson told me that he acknowledged this to him." *Boswell*, i. 250. Again, "I observed it was the Suspirius of his *Rambler* (No. 59). He said Goldsmith had 'owned he had borrowed it from thence." iii. 38. I would venture to say, notwithstanding, that Goldsmith seems to have borrowed more largely from one of his own essays in filling in the rich touches of the character, than from anything of Johnson's. In the sketch of the philosopher in the *Citizen of the World*, for example (Letter xcii), whose science has only the effect of making him miserable, we are continually reminded of Croaker (now and then, too, of Swift's immortal Laputa), and his glorious absurdities. Let me quote one or two entries from the doleful philosopher's diary. "The moon is, I find, at her old pranks. Her appulses, librations, 'and other irregularities indeed amaze me. My daughter, too, is this morning gone 'off with a grenadier. No way surprising. I was never able to give her a relish for 'wisdom. She ever promised to be a mere expletive in the creation. But the 'moon, the moon gives me real uneasiness." "The obliquity of the equator with 'the ecliptic is now twenty minutes less than when it was observed two thousand 'years ago by Piteas. If this be the case, in six thousand the obliquity will be still 'less by a whole degree, . . . and in the space of about a million of years, England 'will actually travel to the Antarctic pole. I shudder at the change! How shall our



masterly invention, and rich breadth of comedy, which made a living man out of this half page of a book, were entirely Goldsmith's. It is the business of the stage to deal with what lies about us most familiarly, *humanitas humanissima*; and it is <sup>1767.</sup> the test of a dramatist of genius that he should make matters <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> of this kind, in themselves the least remote, appear to be the most original. No one had seen him on the stage before; yet every one had known, or been, his own Croaker. For all the world is for ever croaking, more or less; and only a few know why. "Never mind the world," says the excellent Mrs. Croaker to her too anxious lord; "never mind the world, my dear, you were "never in a pleasanter place in your life." On the other hand, who does not feel that Mr. Croaker is also right after his fashion? "There's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes before-hand, we never feel them when they come." In excellent harmony with these imaginary misfortunes, too, are the ideal acquaintances of Lofty; as new to the stage, and as commonly met with in the street. Jack Lofty is the first of the family of Jack Brags, who have since been so laughter-moving in books as well as theatres; nor is his mirth without a moral. "I begin to find that the "man who first invented the art of speaking truth, was a much "cunninger fellow than I thought him." This was Mrs. Inchbald's

"unhappy grandchildren endure the hideous climate! A million of years will soon "be accomplished: they are but a moment when compared to eternity; then shall "our charming country, as I may say, in a moment of time, resemble the hideous "wilderness of Nova Zembla. . . . To-night, by my calculation, the long-predicted "comet is to make its first appearance. Heavens! what terrors are impending over "our little dim speck of earth! Dreadful visitation! Are we to be scorched in its "fires, or only smothered in the vapour of its tail? That is the question! Thought- "less mortals, go build houses, plant orchards, purchase estates, for to-morrow you "die. But what if the comet should not come? That would be equally fatal. "Comets are servants which periodically return to supply the sun with fuel. If "our sun, therefore, should be disappointed of the expected supply, and all his "fuel be in the mean time burnt out, he must expire like an exhausted taper. "What a miserable situation must our earth be in without his enlivening rays! " . . . The comet has not yet appeared. I am sorry for it: first, sorry because "my calculation is false; secondly, sorry lest the sun should want fuel; thirdly, sorry "lest the wits should laugh at our erroneous predictions; and, fourthly, sorry because "if it appears to-night, it must necessarily come within the sphere of the earth's "attraction, and Heaven help the unhappy country on which it happens to fall!"

favourite character; when it fell into the hands of the admirable Lewis, on the play's reproduction half a century since, it became a general favourite; and when a proposed revival of the comedy <sup>1767.</sup> was interrupted a few years ago by the abrupt termination <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> of the best theatrical management within my recollection, it was the character selected for personation by the celebrated actor who then held Garrick's office and power in the theatre.\*

Yet on the unlucky Lofty it was that the weight of Garrick's hostile criticism descended. He pointed out that according to the construction of the comedy, its important figures were Croaker and Honeywood; that anything which drew off attention from them must damage the theatrical effect; and that a new character should be introduced, not to divide interest or laughter with theirs, but to bring out their special contrasts more broadly. It was a criticism unworthy of Garrick, because founded on the most limited stage notions; yet he adhered to it pertinaciously. He would play the alteration, if made; but he would not play the comedy as it stood. Goldsmith made in the first instance very violent objections; softened into remonstrance and persuasion, which he found equally unavailing; is described to have written many letters, which displayed in more than the confusion of their language and the unsteadiness of their writing the anxiety and eagerness of the writer; and at last, under the bitter goad of his pecuniary wants, is understood to have made partial concession. But it had come too late. The alterations were certainly not made, though the comedy remained some time longer in Garrick's hands. There was a long fluctuation between doubt and encouragement, says the *Percy Memoir*, "with his usual uncertainty." The truth appears to have been, that the more Garrick examined the comedy, the less available to his views he found it; and he was at last driven to an expedient he had before found serviceable, when more had been promised than he was able to perform, and his authorial relations were become somewhat complex. He

\* The allusion is to Mr. Macready, who contemplated the revival of the *Good-Natured Man* during his last season at Drury-lane.

proposed a sort of arbitration. But poor Goldsmith smarted more under this than any other part of the tedious negotiation; and, on Garrick's proceeding to name for his arbitrator Whitehead the laureate, who was acting at the time as his "reader" of <sup>1767.</sup> ~~Æt. 39.~~ new plays for Drury-lane, a dispute of so much vehemence and anger ensued, that the services of Burke as well as Reynolds were needed to moderate the disputants. Of all the manager's slights of the poet, this was forgotten last; and occasion to recall it was always seized with bitterness. There was in the following year a hideously unintelligible play called *Zingis*, forced upon Garrick by a "distinguished officer in the Indian service," and by Garrick forced nine nights upon the public, as to which the same process again took place, under resolute protest from the gallant author. "I think it very unnecessary," said the gallant Col. Alexander Dow, and being a stronger man than Goldsmith he carried his point, "to submit the tragedy to any man's judgment but yours . . . I "know not in what manner Doctor Goldsmith came to a knowledge of this transaction; but it is certain that he mentioned it "publicly last night at Ranelagh, to a gentleman who asked me "in a jeering manner, *What sentence the committee of critics had "passed on my play?*"\*

Such was the state of affairs, and of feeling, between Garrick and Goldsmith, when a piece of news came suddenly to their knowledge, in no small degree interesting to both. Beard's uncertainty as to his own and his father-in-law's property in Covent-garden had closed at last, in a very unexpected arrangement. Early in the May of this year Colman's mother (who was

\* *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 306. Col. Dow was now living with James Macpherson, the translator of *Ossian*, the full-mouthed style of which had been his tragic model. Carlyle dined with him in London at the time, meeting at his table "Dr. John Douglas and Garrick, the two Macphersons, John Home, and David "Hume;" and relates a story he told them of having had charge of the Great Mogul with two regiments under his command at Delhi, and of having had a strong temptation to dethrone the monarch and mount the throne in his stead, "which he said he "could easily have done:" replying to Carlyle's inquiry what caused him to desist, "that it was reflecting on what his old schoolfellows at Dunbar would think "of him for being guilty of such an action." *Autobiography*, 505.



sister to Lady Bath) died, leaving him a legacy of six thousand pounds; and this strengthened him for a step, of which it is probable that Garrick, in a letter already quoted, threw out the

<sup>1767.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 39.</sup> first brooding germ. They had but patched and darned their quarrel; \* and on the occasion of a comedy by Colman from Voltaire (*The English Merchant*) produced in this preceding February, new rents had shown themselves. Meanwhile it was reported that two men of mere business, named Harris and Rutherford, were in treaty with Beard; but another rumour was with greater difficulty believed, to the effect that inducements had been successfully thrown out to Powell, notwithstanding his habit, according to his own letters, of teaching his wife and children to bless Garrick's name, to withdraw him from his Drury-lane engagements and enlist him in hostility to Garrick. "I have not always met "with gratitude in a playhouse," had been the latter's remark, while Powell's gratitude was overflowing: and here was an illustration of it quite unexpected. There is no reason to doubt the interest which, in the midst of all his jealousies of temperament, the great actor had evinced for his young competitor; and from a narrative which necessarily throws into prominence the weaker points of his character, it should not be omitted that he really loved his art, and desired always to see it advanced in esteem. "Make sure of your ground in every step you take," had been his advice to Powell. "The famous Baron† of France used to say, "that an actor should be *nursed in the lap of Queens*; by which "he meant that the best accomplishments were necessary to form "a great actor. Read at your leisure other books besides plays "in which you are concerned. Do not sacrifice your taste and "feelings to applause: convert an audience to *your* manner, do "not be converted to theirs." It was ill return to find Powell now secretly deserting to the camp of the enemy! "It is impos-

\* *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 252.

† The French actor, Baron. Grimm records the saying in proof of Baron's posterous vanity. The letter quoted is that of December 1764. *Gar. Cor.* i. 177-8. See *ante*, i. 351-2, and 390-1.

“sible that it should hurt us,” Garrick nevertheless wrote to his brother, with a sense that it would hurt them visible in every line. “If Powell is to be director, we have reason to rejoice; for he is finely calculated for management. What a strange affair! We shall know all in time. I am satisfied, be the news true or false.”\* He knew more when he next wrote, and was less able to comprehend it; but he protested that everybody would be surprised at the ease and little concern he should manifest on the occasion, and proceeded to give his brother amusing proofs of equanimity. “I am sure there is something in it; and yet, the more I think of it, the more I am puzzled. Who finds money? what is the plan? who are the directors? Damn me if I comprehend it, but I shall know more. What! has Holland no hand in this? Is *he* hummed? I have not the least idea of the matter, nor have I the least notion of their doing anything to give us one moment of uneasiness.”†

Holland, though a young actor in the same walk and of ambitious expectations, had a most romantic friendship for Powell; had first introduced him to Garrick; had surrendered parts to him which at the time were understood to be his own; and, strangely enough, while the sudden death of Powell was matter of general regret in less than two years from this date, himself very suddenly died. But he had not the means to join Powell in such a scheme as the present, and the doubt of Powell’s own means was a very natural one on Garrick’s part. The money required, as he had himself before stated, was sixty thousand pounds, of which Harris and Rutherford contributed half; and with whatever reason he had questioned Powell’s tact for the management, his inability to supply the money might at any rate be supposed unquestionable. But even Garrick seems as little to have known what a fashion his handsome young rival had become; without as well as within the theatre, as that in two short years this fashion, and its attendant dissipation, would claim their victim.‡ Eleven thousand pounds

\* *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 254.

† *Ibid.*, i. 255.

‡ Powell died at Bristol, on the 7th July, 1769, of a rheumatic fever and sore throat,

were advanced towards Powell's share in the patent, by the means and intercession of a famous beauty; and Colman, having added to his mother's legacy by a loan from Becket the bookseller, <sup>1767.</sup> consented to supply Powell's ignorance of management, and <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> become purchaser of the fourth share. The matter was finally arranged; another important desertion was effected from Drury-lane in the person of Yates and his wife (an exquisite, gentle actress, though Kitty Clive, in one of her letters,\* objects to her habit of "toter about to much, and flumping down to often"); and the agreements were signed before Garrick again wrote from Bath to his brother. He was now uneasy enough. "Powell is a "scoundrel," he said, "and Colman will repent his conjunction in "every vein. . . . I hope to God that my partner has not talked "with Powell of an agreement, or a friendly intercourse, between "the houses; that would be ruin indeed! I cannot forgive "Powell."† His partner, Lacy, *had* so spoken, and had indiscreetly promised a continuance of friendship. This, Garrick at once withdrew; and exacting, as he had a perfect right to do, Powell's bond of a thousand pounds forfeited by the breach of his engagement, he brought over Barry and Mrs. Dancer to

and a very handsome monument to his memory testified the general regret. Colman wrote rather a poor poetical inscription for the marble, which however sufficed to raise a hornet's nest of deans and prebends round his ears.

\* *Penes me.* Sir Joshua Reynolds related that when he and Garrick sat together in the orchestra, on the first night of Jephson's *Braganza*, he saw Garrick suffused with tears at Mrs. Yates. James Harris (the author of *Hermes*) thus describes to Dr. Hoadly her benefit in the following Covent-garden season: "Never a fuller—"pit and boxes thrown together: she acted the part of Electra in the *Orestes* of "Voltaire, translated on purpose for her. For tone, and justness of elocution, for "uninterrupted attention, for everything that was nervous, various, elegant, and true "in attitudes and action, I never saw her equal but in Garrick, and forgive me for "saying I cannot call him her superior. . . . Fame reports her to have had interviews "this summer at Paris with the incomparable Madame Clairon. She is soon to "act *Medea*, for the benefit of her husband." Woolf's *Biographical Memoirs of Joseph Warton*, 342.

† *Gar. Cor.* i. 256. And see this great theatrical feud intelligently and fairly stated in the prefatory memoir to *Garrick Correspondence*, i. xlv-v. xlvii-viii. See also Murphy's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 48-9; and Peake's *Colman Family*, i. 192-8. Further notices of the dispute, and much curious matter in reference to the new theatrical management, will be found in Foot's *Life of Murphy*, 346, &c.

Drury-lane by a bribe of £1500 a year, and openly prepared for war.

From the Yateses, with whom he was well acquainted, Goldsmith probably heard of all this while in progress, and <sup>1767.</sup> naturally with some satisfaction. He made immediate over-<sup>Æt. 39.</sup>tures to Colman. By midsummer, Powell being in Bristol and the other two partners abroad, Colman was in the thick of his new duties; and, fortunately for Goldsmith, being left to make his preparations alone his first acts of management (as he afterwards stated during his disputes with his fellow-patentees) were "the receiving a comedy of Doctor Goldsmith, and making an engagement "with Mr. Macklin," without consulting Harris and Rutherford, as he knew not where to direct to them. Very creditable, in all its circumstances, was this manifestation of sympathy on Colman's part to an untried brother dramatist; and Goldsmith, though so wearied already with his dramatic experience as to have resolved that his first should be his last comedy, might fairly think and rejoice, for others if not for himself, that dramatic poets were likely for the future to have a protector who would decline taking advantage of their dependent situation, and scorn the importance derivable from trifling with their anxieties. The words are in a letter he addressed to Colman, which now lies before me; which was found the other day among the papers of Colman's successor at the Haymarket;\* and of which I here present a fac-simile to the reader. A man's handwriting is part of himself, and helps to complete his portraiture.

\* For this letter, found among the papers of the late Mr. Morris, the proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre, I am indebted to the kindness of his executor, my friend Mr. George Raymond.



1767.  
Æt. 89.

Temple, Garden Court,

July 19<sup>th</sup>

Dear Sir,

I am very much obliged to you, both for your kind partiality in my favour, and your tenderness in shortening the interval of my expectation. That the play is liable to many objections I well know, but I am happy that it is in hands the most capable in the world of removing them. If then Dear Sir, you will complete your



1761.

Æt. 39.

favours by putting the piece into such a state as it may be acted, or of directing me how to do it I shall ever retain a sense of your goodness to me. And indeed this most probably ~~the~~ this be the last I shall ever write yet I can't help feeling a secret satisfaction that poets for the future are likely to have a protector who declines taking advantage of their dependent situation, and scorns that impotence which

1767.

Æt. 29.

may be acquired by trifling  
with their anxieties.

I am Dear Sir with  
the greatest esteem your most  
obedient humble servant;

Oliver Goldsmith.

To  
George Colman Esq.  
Richmond.

Having taken this decisive step, Goldsmith wrote on the following day to the now rival manager, who had left town for Lichfield; and, though his letter shows the coolness which had arisen between them, it is a curious proof of his deference to the sensitiveness of Garrick that he should use only the name of the old Covent-garden patentee, and put forth what he had recently done with his play under cover of his original intention in respect to it. His letter is dated London, July 20, 1767, and runs thus: "Sir, "A few days ago Mr. Beard renewed his claim to the piece which

"I had written for his stage, and had as a friend submitted to  
 "your perusal. As I found you had very great difficulties about  
 "that piece, I complied with his desire; thinking it wrong to  
 "take up the attention of my friends with such petty concerns <sup>1767.</sup>  
 "as mine, or to load your good nature by a compliance <sub>Æt. 39.</sub>  
 "rather with their requests than my merits. I am extremely sorry  
 "that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judg-  
 "ment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must  
 "in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure  
 "you, sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any  
 "other account, but am with an high opinion of your abilities and  
 "a very real esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant,  
 "OLIVER GOLDSMITH." To this Garrick answered by a letter,  
 dated five days later from Lichfield, in these terms: "Sir, I was  
 "at Birmingham when your letter came to this place, or I should  
 "have thanked you for it immediately. I was indeed much hurt  
 "that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and  
 "friendly attention to your play, for the remains of a former mis-  
 "understanding which I had as much forgot as if it had never  
 "existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat,  
 "that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly  
 "would in receiving them. It has been the business, and ambi-  
 "tion, of my life, to live upon the best terms with men of genius;  
 "and as I know that Dr. Goldsmith will have no reason to change  
 "his present friendly disposition towards me, I shall be glad of  
 "any future opportunity to convince him how much I am his  
 "obedient servant and well-wisher, D. GARRICK."

Thus fairly launched was this great theatrical rivalry; which re-  
 ceived even additional zest from the spirit with which Foote was now  
 beginning his first regular campaign in the Haymarket,\* by right

\* He had pulled down the old theatre in the recess, and having rebuilt it as it  
 now stands, opened it in May 1767 with "an occasional prelude." Bee's *Life of*  
*Foote*, prefixed to the *Works*, i. cxxiv. The original theatre had been appropriated  
 to the performance of French plays, at that time a highly fashionable amusement.  
 I copy from a newspaper of 15th December, 1720, the announcement of its first open-  
 ing: "At the New Theatre in the Haymarket, between Little Suffolk-street and

of the summer patent the Duke of York had obtained for him (some compensation for the accident at Lord Mexborough's the preceding summer, when a practical joke of the Duke's cost Foote his leg), and with help of the two great reinforcements already secured for Drury-lane, of Barry and his betrothed Mrs. Dancer, afterwards his wife. They played in a poor and somewhat absurd tragedy called the *Countess of Salisbury*, which had made a vast sensation in Dublin; and it is related of Goldsmith, as an instance of the zeal with which he had embarked against the Drury-lane party, that he took whimsical occasion during its performance of turning a crowded and till then favourable audience suddenly against the tragical Countess and her representative, by ludicrous allusion to another kind of actress then figuring on a wider stage. He had sat out four foolish acts with great calmness and apparent temper; but as the plot thickened in the fifth, and the scene became filled with "blood" and "slaughter," he got up from his seat in a great hurry, cried out very audibly, "*Brownrigg! Brownrigg! by God!*" and left the theatre.\* It may have been partisanship, but it was also very pardonable wit.

Nor, if partisanship may be justified at any time, was it here without its excuses. He had reason to think Colman embarked in a good work, and for which, whether knowingly or not, he had made an unexampled sacrifice. On the death of stingy old Lord Bath three years before, he had left his enormous wealth of a million and a quarter sterling to an old brother he despised, with a sort of injunction that his nephew was to have part in its ultimate disposition; and the Covent-garden arrangements had not long been completed when this brother (General Pulteney) died, leaving Colman a simple four-hundred a year. His connection with Miss Ford the actress had been displeasing to the general; but the unpardonable offence was his having secretly turned manager of a theatre.† Miss Ford was the mother of the younger Colman, now

"James-street, which is now completely finished, will be performed a French comedy, "as soon as the rest of the actors arrive from Paris."

\* Davies's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 156.

† Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, i, 366.



a child, yet already old enough to feel, as he remembered when he wrote his *Random Records*, the impression at this time made upon him by the poet's simple and playful manners, and by that love of children which had attended Goldsmith through <sup>1767.</sup> life, which was noted everywhere, and made itself felt at even <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> the small dinner parties of pompous Hawkins. "I little thought "what I should have to boast," says Miss Hawkins, describing her experiences when she used to sit upon the carpet in the drawing-room till dinner was announced, "when Goldsmith taught me to "play *Jack and Gill* by two bits of paper on his fingers."\* This lady observed, too, a distinction between Johnson's and Garrick's way with children,† which the younger Colman partly confirms in contrasting Goldsmith's with Garrick's. The one, he tells us, played to please the boy, the other as though to please himself;‡ and not even Foote, with his knowing broad grin, his snuff-begrimed face, and his unvarying salutation of "blow your nose, "child," was to him half so humorous as Goldsmith, of whose tenderness of course he had nothing. The poet would at any time, for amusement of the nursery, dance a mock minuet, sing a song, or play the flute; and thought little of even putting on his best wig the wrong side foremost. One of these childish reminiscences will bear relating in detail. Drinking coffee one evening with Colman, at one of his first visits to Richmond, Goldsmith took little George upon his knee to amuse him; and

\* Miss Hawkins's *Anecdotes* (1822), 7.

† "Garrick had a frown, and spoke impetuously—Johnson was slow and kind in "his way to children." Miss Hawkins's *Anecdotes*, 23. It is in an earlier part of the same book (not her *Memoirs*, which were not published till a few years later) she describes very pleasantly her childish recollection of Garrick: "I see him now, in a "dark blue coat, the button-holes bound with gold, a small cocked-hat laced with "gold, his waistcoat very open, and his countenance never at rest, and, indeed, "seldom his person . . . sometimes sitting on a table, and then, if he saw my brothers "at a distance on the lawn, shooting off like an arrow out of a bow in a spirited chase "of them round the garden." *Anecdotes*, 23.

‡ "All this was very kind and condescending, but it wanted the *bonhomme* of "Goldsmith, who played to please the boy, whereas Garrick always seemed playing "to please himself, as he did in a theatre . . . he diverted and dazzled me, but "never made me love him; and I had always this feeling for him, though I was "too young to define it." George Colman's *Random Records*, i. 117-118.



being rewarded for his pains by a spiteful slap in the face, summary paternal punishment was inflicted by solitary confinement in an adjoining room. But here, when matters seemed desperate <sup>1767.</sup> with the howling and screaming little prisoner, the door was <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> unexpectedly unlocked and opened. "It was the tender-hearted Doctor himself," pursues the teller of the story, "with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed, till I began to brighten. Goldsmith, who in regard to children was like the Village Preacher he has so beautifully described, for 'their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed,' seized the



"propitious moment of returning good humour; so he put down the candle, and began to conjure. He placed three hats which happened to be in the room, upon the carpet, and a shilling under each: the shillings, he told me, were England, France, and Spain. *Hey, presto, cockolorum!* cried the Doctor; and lo! on uncovering the shillings, which had been dispersed each beneath a separate hat, they were all found congregated under one. I was no Politician at five years old, and therefore might not have wondered at the sudden revolution which brought England, France, and Spain all under one crown; but as I was also no Conjuror, it amazed me beyond measure. Astonishment might have amounted to awe for one who appeared to me gifted with the power of performing miracles, if the good-nature of the

“man had not obviated my dread of the magician ; but from that  
“time, whenever the Doctor came to visit my father ‘I pluck’d his  
“‘gown to share the good man’s smile,’ a game of romps con-  
“stantly ensued, and we were always cordial friends and <sup>1767.</sup>  
“merry playfellows.”\* The little hero of the incident was a <sup>Æt. 39.</sup>  
child of only five years old, but we have evidence in the letters of  
Garriek to his father that he used at this time to imitate Garriek  
showing Charles Dibdin how to act Lord Ogleby, and that even a  
full year and a half earlier he had entertained Mrs. Garriek with a  
whole “budget” of stories and songs, had delivered the ditty of the  
*Chimney Sweep* with exquisite taste as a solo, and, in the form of  
a duet with Garriek himself, *Old Rose and Burn the Bellows*.†  
We shall be perfectly safe therefore in accepting it on his autho-  
rity that Oliver Goldsmith in 1767 was neither more nor less than  
a conjurer.

\* Colman’s *Random Records*, i. 110-113.

† Letter dated 15th July, 1766, in Peake’s *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, i. 186-7.  
And see Colman’s *Posthumous Letters*, 296-7.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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### THE WEDNESDAY-CLUB.

1767.

BUT more serious affairs than conjuring again claim Goldsmith's attention, and ours. His comedy cannot, in the most favourable expectation, appear before Christmas; and his necessities are hardly less pressing, meanwhile, than in his <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> most destitute time. The utmost he received this year from the elder Newbery for his usual task-work would seem to have been about ten pounds for a compilation on a historical subject (*The British Empire*). The concurrent advance of another ten pounds on his promissory note, though side by side with the ominous shadow of the yet unpaid note of four years preceding, shows their friendly relations subsisting still;\* but the present illness of the publisher, from which he never recovered, had for some months interrupted the ordinary course of his business, and its management was gradually devolving on his nephew. No less a person than Tom Davies, however, came to Goldsmith's relief.

Tom's business had thriven since he left the stage, and he deter-

\* Here (Newbery MSS.) is the memorandum to which I refer: "1764, Oct. 29. "Dr. Goldsmith on account of *English Lives*, 8*l.* 8*s.* Taylor's Works, 12*s.* 1765, "Sept. 12th, for half the copy of *Essays*, 10*l.* 10*s.* 1767, July 13th, for *British Empire*, 10*l.* Promissory note, Oct. 11th, 1763, 48*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* Ditto, July 7th, 1767, "10*l.* [Total] 87*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*" In a subsequent memorandum of nearly the same date, the following interesting doubt occurs: "Query—Whether the money had at the "Society was 4*l.* 4*s.*" And in a separate paper, in Goldsmith's hand, I find the following: "I promise to pay to John Newbery or order ten pounds on demand for "value received. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. July 7, 1767."

mined to speculate in a history. Goldsmith's anonymous *Letters from a Nobleman to his Son* continued to sell, and still to excite curiosity whether or not Lord Lyttelton had really written them. "I asked Lord L. himself," writes the learned Mrs. <sup>1767.</sup> Carter to the less learned Mrs. Vesey,\* "who assured me <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> that he had never read them through, and moreover seemed to be very clearly of opinion that he did not write them. Seriously, "you may deny his being the author with the fullest certainty. "It seems they were writ by Lord Cork." All this sort of gossip (with no more foundation in the latter case than that Lord Cork and Orrery *had* addressed to his son a translation of Pliny's as well as other letters, and was no longer alive to contradict the rumour) was better known to Davies than to any one; and the sensible suggestion occurred to him of a *History of Rome* from the same hand, in the same easy, popular, unlearned manner. An agreement was accordingly drawn up, in which Goldsmith undertook to write such a book in two volumes, and if possible to complete it in two years, for the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas: an undertaking of a somewhat brighter complexion than has yet appeared in these pages; rife with future promise, it may be, in that respect; and certainly very creditable to Davies.† It is alleged by Seward and Isaac Reed, that, shortly before this agreement, Goldsmith's necessities had induced him to apply for the Gresham lectureship on Civil Law; an office of small remuneration and smaller responsibility, which the death of a Mr. Mace had vacated and to which a Mr. Jeffries was elected; but his name does not seem to have been formally entered as a candidate, and it is more certain that shortly after the agreement with Davies he had again taken lodgings in his favourite Islington, and was busy writing there.

Goldsmith's resource, in the midst of labour as in his brief intervals of leisure, was still the country-haunt, the club, and the theatre; nor should what was called his Wednesday-club, which has hitherto escaped all his biographers, fail to find commemoration

\* Mrs. Carter's *Letters* (Feb. 19th, 1766), iii. 274-5.

*Percy Memoir*, 78.



here. The social dignities of Gerrard-street had not sufficed for his "clubable" propensities. Wholly at his ease there, he could not always be; and it will happen to even those who are <sup>1767.</sup> greatest with their great friends, to find themselves pleasantest with their least. The very year before Dr. Johnson died he expressed his own strong sense of this, in founding the modest club to which he invited Reynolds ("the terms are lax, "and the expenses light . . . we meet thrice a week, and he who "misses forfeits twopence");\* and, if it were a want to Johnson to have occasional admixture of inferior intellects to be at ease with, how much more to Goldsmith! His shilling-rubber club at the Devil-tavern, scene of that earliest of clubs for which Ben Jonson wrote his Latin rules, has been already named; and he frequented another of the same modest pretension, in the parlour of the Bedford in Covent-garden. But what most consoled him for the surrendered haunts of his obscurer days was a minor club (known afterwards by his own name) at the Globe-tavern in Fleet-street; where he attended every Wednesday as regularly as on the Mondays or Fridays in Gerrard-street, and seems to have "played "the fool" as agreeably as when he had no reputation to be damaged by the folly. Songs sung after supper were the leading attraction at this club; and I derive my principal knowledge of it from a collection of songs and poems of the time which belonged to one of its members, a hanger-on at the theatres familiarly known by most of the actors, and to whom we owe a little book called *Mackliniana*. This worthy "William Ballantyne" had solaced his old age with manuscript notes on the amusements of his youth; and the book, so annotated, passed into the possession of my friend Mr. Bolton Corney, who placed it at my disposal.

Whether Macklin belonged to the club appears to be doubtful, but among the least obscure members were King the comedian

\* Letters to Sir Joshua, dated Dec. 4, 1783. I regret that Reynolds declined. Among the members was Cooke, so often quoted in this memoir. See *Boswell*, viii. 250.



(whose reputation Lord Ogleby had established); little Hugh Kelly, a young Irishman of eight-and-twenty, who had lately shown some variety of cleverness and superficial talent, and now occupied chambers near Goldsmith's in the Temple; <sup>1767.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 39.</sup> Edward Thompson, whom Garrick assisted with his interest to promotion in the navy, and who is still remembered for his songs and his edition of Andrew Marvel; and another Irishman, named Glover, also a protégé of Garrick's, and mentioned on an earlier page,\* who had been bred a doctor, figured afterwards as an actor, and now earned scanty subsistence as a sort of Grub-street Galen. The anecdotes of Goldsmith which appeared on his death in the *Annual Register* (with the signature G), and some of which reappeared in the Dublin edition (1777) of his poems by Malone, to be afterwards adopted into Evans's biographical sketch and transferred to the *Percy Memoir*, were written by this Glover; who was one of the many humble Irish clients whom Goldsmith's fame drew around him, and who profited by every scantiest gleam of his prosperity. It is he who says (and none had better cause to say it), "*Our Doctor*," as Goldsmith was now universally called, "had a constant levee of his distressed countrymen, whose wants, as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he has been often known to leave himself even without a guinea, in order to supply the necessities of others."† It is to be added of Glover, however, who was notorious for his songs and imitations, that he was addicted to practical jokes; and often rewarded his patron's generosity with very impudent betrayal of his simplicity. It was he who, in one of their summer rambles over Hampstead, took Goldsmith into a cottage at West-

\* *Ante*, i. 57-8, and 68. "He is a most skilful, worthy man, a good writer, and a steady friend to Government. I have known him long; he is much beloved, and the worst thing I ever heard of him was, that, by his skill in his profession, he recovered a thief, after he had hung half-an-hour, and which thief, before he had healed the circle the rope had made, picked Glover's pocket by way of gratitude, and never thanked him for his good offices." Garrick to Lord Rochford, recommending Glover for a Surgeoncy in the Essex Militia.

† Preface to the *Poems* (Ed. 1777), vi.

end, through the open window of which they saw a little party assembled at tea of whom in reality he knew nothing though he undertook to introduce his friend, and who actually, to <sup>1767.</sup> the poet's awkward horror and mal-address when he saw <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> the trick, imposed himself on the party assembled as a pretended old acquaintance, on the host as known to the guests and on the guests as familiar with the host, and coolly sat down to tea with them.

Hugh Kelly seems to have been a greater favourite than Glover with good Mr. Ballantyne. "Much," says one of his notes, "as "I esteemed Mr. Kelly, when a member of the Wednesday-club "at the Globe in Fleet-street, called Goldsmith's, who was seldom "absent—I respected him because he was always unassuming—"this" (the note is appended to a poem of Kelly's called *Meditation*), "had I then known him to be the author of it, would have "made me adore him." The poem nevertheless is poor enough; and, though Kelly was certainly popular with his nearer friends and had many kindly qualities, his unassumingness may be doubted. He had lately emerged to notoriety, out of a desperate and obscure struggle, by somewhat questionable arts. His youth had been passed in Dublin as a staymaker's apprentice, and making sudden flight from this uncongenial employment, he was obliged to resume it in London to save himself from starvation; but he succeeded afterwards in hiring himself as writer to an attorney, from this got promotion to Grub-street, and had laboured meanly, up to the present year, in hack work for the magazines and newspapers (Newbery having given him employment on the *Public Ledger*), when it occurred to him to make profit of Churchill's example and set up as a satirist and censor of the stage. This he did after the usual fashion of an imitator, and in his *Thespis* caricatured the *Rosciad*. Poor Mrs. Dancer he called a "moon-eyed idiot;" talked of "Clive's weak head and execrable "heart;" libelled such men as Woodward and Moody; and lavished all his praise on the Hursts, Ackmans, and Bransbys.\*

\* See Davies's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 140; and Taylor's *Records*, i. 95-102.

Yet though the manifest source of such inspiration was a well-known public-house within a few doors of Drury-lane theatre, where the fettered lions of the stage were always growling against their tamers, we find that "the talents for satire displayed in this work by Mr. Kelly, recommended him at once to the notice of Mr. Garrick." What resulted from that notice will soon, with somewhat higher pretensions, re-introduce the object of it; and meanwhile he may be left with Mr. Ballantyne's praise, and with the remark, to counterbalance it, of Johnson, who made answer to Kelly's request for permission to converse with him, "Sir, I never desire to converse with a man who has written more than he has read." \*

1767.

Æt. 39.

Of the obscurer members of the Wednesday or Globe club our mention may be limited to a Mr. Gordon, who is remembered by Mr. Ballantyne in connection with the jovial and jocund song of *Nottingham Ale*. "Mr. Gordon," he says, "the largest man I ever kept company with, usually sung this song at the Globe-club; and it always very much pleased Doctor Goldsmith, Doctor Glover, good Tom King the comedian, and myself, William Ballantyne." Nor was the evening's amusement limited to songs, but had the variety of dramatic imitations, with occasional original epigram; and here was first heard that celebrated epitaph on Edward Purdon, which showed that Goldsmith had lately been reading Pope's and Swift's *Miscellanies*: †

\* It is also said that on Kelly's first introduction to Johnson, after having sat a short time, he got up to take his leave with the remark that he feared a longer visit might be troublesome; where to Johnson replied, "Not in the least, sir; I had forgotten that you were in the room." *Boswell*, viii. 411. Yet Mr. John Nichols, after describing Kelly to Boswell as a person "in whom vanity was somewhat too predominant," added that Johnson "had a real friendship for him."

† The original of all is the epitaph on "*La Mort du Sieur Etienne*."

Il est au bout de ses travaux  
Il a passé le Sieur Etienne;  
En ce monde il eut tant des maux  
Qu'on ne croit pas qu'il revienne."

With this perhaps Goldsmith was familiar, and had therefore less scruple in laying felonious hands on the epigram in the *Miscellanies* (Swift, xiii. 372):

Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,  
 Who long was a bookseller's hack ;  
 He led such a damnable life in this world,  
 I don't think he'll wish to come back.

1767.

Æt. 39.

It was in the April of the present year that Purdon fitly closed his luckless life by suddenly dropping down dead in Smithfield ; and as it was chiefly Goldsmith's pittance that had saved him thus long from starvation, it was well that the same friend should give him his solitary chance of escape from oblivion. " Doctor Goldsmith made this epitaph," says William Ballantyne, " in his way from his chambers in the Temple to the Wednesday evening's club at the Globe. *I think he will never come back,*" " I believe he said. I was sitting by him, and he repeated it " more than twice. *I think he will never come back.*" Ah ! and not altogether as a jest, it may be, the second and the third time. It is not without a certain pathos to me that he should so have repeated it. There was something in Purdon's fate, from their first meeting in college to that incident in Smithfield, which bore no very violent contrast to his own ; and remembering what Glover has said of Oliver's frequent sudden descents from mirth to melancholy, some such fitful change of temper would here have been natural enough. " His disappointments at these times," Glover tells us, " made him peevish and sullen ; and he has often " left a party of convivial friends abruptly in the evening, in order " to go home and brood over his misfortunes."\* But a better medicine for his grief than brooding over it, was a sudden start into the country to forget it ; and it was probably with a feeling of this kind he had in the summer revisited Islington, to which, after this Wednesday-club digression, we must now for a very brief space accompany him.

He had one room in the turret of Canonbury-house, which,

" Well, then, poor G—— lies underground !  
 So there's an end of honest Jack.  
 So little justice here he found,  
 'Tis ten to one he'll ne'er come back."

\* *Annual Register*, xvii. 31. *Life* prefixed to Malone's edition (1777), ix.



since altered and subdivided, to within the last twenty years remained as it was in his time ; a genuine relic of Elizabeth's hunting seat. It was an old oak room on the first floor, with Gothic windows, panelled wainscot, and a recess in its eastern corner <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> for a large press-bedstead, which doubtless the poet occupied.\* Canonbury-tower, with which Newbery had some connection as holding a lease or property in it (of which he gave the management to the Flemings), was for many years let out in this way, and had been the frequent resort of men connected with literature : but if, as at times alleged, any of Goldsmith's poetry was written here, it was written in the present autumn, and could have been but the fragments or beginnings of a poem ; for he did not return to the lodging. He now remained some weeks in it ; and is said to have been often found, during the time, among a social party of his fellow-lodgers (publishers Robinson and Francis Newbery, printers Baker and Hamilton, editor Beaufort afterwards of the *Town and Country Magazine*, poets Woty and Huddleston Wynne, and pamphleteering parsons Rider and Sellon), presiding at the festive board of the Crown-tavern, in the Islington lower-road, where they had formed a kind of temporary club. At the close of the year he had returned to the Temple, was in communication with Burke about his comedy, and was again pretty constant in his attendance at Gerrard-street.

\* Mr. Hone in his *Every Day Book* says, on the authority of Mr. Symes, bailiff of the manor of Islington, "that his mother-in-law, Mrs. Evans, who had lived there "three-and-thirty years, and was wife to the former bailiff, often told him that her "aunt, Mrs. Tapps, a seventy years' inhabitant of the tower, was accustomed to talk "much about Goldsmith and his apartment. It was the old oak-room on the first "floor. Mrs. Tapps affirmed that he there wrote his *Deserted Village*, and that "he slept in a large press-bedstead placed in the eastern corner. From this room two "small ones for sleeping in have since been separated, by the removal of the panelled "oak wainscotting from the north-east wall, and the cutting of two doors through it, "with a partition between them ; and since Goldsmith was here, the window on the "south side has been broken through." The *Every Day Book* for 8th May, 1825 (i. 638). The passage in the text was written in 1848.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### PATRONS OF LITERATURE.

1767.

ON his reappearance in London, Goldsmith found political excitement raging, and Burke still rising higher through the storm. He might have wondered to see, among the first acts of the <sup>1767.</sup> new administration, his countryman and friend Robert <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> Nugent, the most furious upholder of colonial taxation, selected for a lordship of the Board of Trade, and raised to the rank of Baron Nugent and Viscount Clare ; yet this was nothing to the marvel of seeing emanate, from Lord Chatham's Chancellor of the Exchequer, a new project for taxation of America. The rest of their career had been only less disgraceful ; nor is it possible, without some allusion to it, to exhibit properly either the social influences of the time, or that incident of Goldsmith's life with which this chapter will close. Violating public faith in their attack on the East India Charter, they had sustained, from its resolute exposure by Mr. O'Bourke (as pompous Beckford, Lord Chatham's tool in the matter, persisted in calling Edmund), a most damaging blow. They had suffered an ignominious defeat, without precedent since Walpole's fall, on the question of continuing the land tax at four shillings, which Dowdeswell succeeded in reducing to three, backed by all the country gentlemen, by the Bedfords and the Grenvilles, by the single partisan or so who still followed Newcastle, and by all the Rockinghams except Burke, who alone ("not having our "number of acres," said the top-booted gentlemen to each other) fell

from his party on that question, and would not vote to lighten the land. They had tasted as bitter humiliation in the later rejection of their overtures for help by the despised head of the last administration, who, manfully acting on Burke's warnings <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> and suggestions, maintained, in the meeting with the Bedfords at Newcastle-house, that the power of Lord Bute was still to be resisted; resolutely refused to sanction any arrangement which would again expose America to the mercies of George Grenville; and finally rejected the party combination which the old Duke of Newcastle, to get himself once more into office, had ever since he left office been labouring to effect "tooth and nail" (that is, says Horace Walpole, "with the one of each sort that he has left, the old "wretch!") And when, during the earlier progress of these confusions and disgraces, Chatham sullenly disappeared from the scene and withdrew the last restraint from his ill-assorted colleagues, George Grenville, seeing his opportunity, had taunted the fiery Townshend to open rebellion. An agent from Connecticut,\* Jared Ingersoll, was present in the House (the reader will remember that these were not the days of reporters), and has described what passed. Grenville stopped suddenly in the midst of a powerful speech on the existing financial depression, and turning to the treasury bench, exclaimed: "You are cowards, "you are afraid of the Americans. You dare not tax America." "Fear!" cried Townshend, from his seat, "fear! cowards! dare "not tax America? *I* dare tax America!" For a moment Grenville stood silent; but immediately added, "Dare you tax "America? I wish to God I could see it;" to which Townshend impetuously retorted, "I will, I will." The King's friends helped Grenville to keep the boaster to his pledge, and he redeemed it. But though he passed his Colonial Importation Duties Bill as easily as a turnpike act, the ill-fated ministry knew no more peace.

\* Since this biography first appeared, Mr. Bancroft has depicted in a lively way (in the second volume of his *History of the American Revolution*, 274-5) the effect which Ingersoll's reports of what was then passing in the English House of Commons produced throughout the towns and villages of Connecticut.

Conway began to languish for the army, Grafton looked wistfully to Newmarket, Shelburne made no secret of his discontent;

and the scenes that followed inflicted shame on all. Each,  
1767.  
Æt. 39. in his separate fashion, appealed against Townshend to Chatham, without, in any case, the courtesy of an answer.

Townshend, with mimicry transcending Foote's, and wit that only Garrick "writing and acting extempore scenes of Congreve" was thought able to have equalled, rose from the seat still shared by his colleagues with himself, to burlesque them, to jeer at them, and, amid murmurs of wonder, admiration, applause, pity, and laughter, to assail even Chatham himself. Burke, strong with a power that could inform even ridicule with passion, rose from where he also still sat, behind the occupants of the treasury bench, to single out each for humiliating contrast with Chatham's silence and scorn; put up mock invocations to that absent, silent, sullen chief of theirs, as a being before whom thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers (and here, at each lofty phrase, amid shouts of laughter, he waved his hand over the ministers), all veiled their faces with their wings; and then, as in despair of reaching by argument a being so remote, passed into a prayer to this "Great Minister above, that rules and governs over all," to have mercy upon them and not destroy the work of his own hands. Augustus Hervey, to the regret of many, called him to order.\* "I have often suffered," cried Burke as he sat down, "under "persecutions of order, but I did not expect its lash while at my "prayers. I venerate the great man, and speak of him accord- "ingly." Still the great man kept silence. He had the gout, and would not leave Bath; he left Bath, and shut himself up in an inn at Marlborough; he left Marlborough, and came to London. But nothing would induce him to see his colleagues; not even the personal entreaties of the King. Would he, then, see himself, his Majesty deigned to ask? He pleaded gout (it seems to have

\* From a letter of Sir Matthew Featherstonehaugh, member for Portsmouth, to Lord Clive. See *Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 145-6; and Walpole's *George III*, ii. 407.



DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.



WILLIAM HOGARTH.







been suppressed gout, a worse affliction, from which he was suffering),\* and retreated to North-end. But in a few days, having been seen by Lord Chesterfield riding about Hampstead-heath, again the King wrote "if you cannot come to me to-morrow <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub>" "I am ready to call at North-end;" and again, under cover of profuse submission, evasion did the work of refusal. By this time, in short, though labouring still with the bodily weakness which induced his first false step, Chatham seems to have discovered the drift of the King; and what it really was that was meant to have been effected under cover of his own great name. Lord Charlemont, describing the state of things to Flood ("Charles Townshend at open war, Conway angry, Lord Shelburne "out of humour, the Duke of Grafton by no means pleased, and "Lord Bute's friends at length positively declaring themselves"), implies little further concealment of the palace-plot; one of Chatham's first remarks on his subsequent reappearance in public, to the effect that "the late good King had something about him "by which it was possible to know whether he liked you or dis- "liked you," was pointedly levelled at the good King's grandson; and there can hardly be a doubt but that his Majesty was now only fencing to obtain time, had already resolved upon a fresh arrangement of the offices, and, even from the moment of the new America-taxation scheme, had turned with decisive favour to Charles Townshend himself. The failure of the cry for help to the Rockinghams, however, so well kept together by Burke (whose lately published *Correspondence* explains many things before obscure), had been accompanied by a failure as decisive in respect

\* Hume describes his state exactly, points out the cause, and indicates the remedy. He writes (in a letter which has escaped the historians) to the Countess de Boufflers (*Private Correspondence*, 243-4): "The public here, as well as with you, believe him "wholly mad; but I am assured it is not so. He is only fallen into extreme low "spirits and into nervous disorders, which render him totally unfit for business, make "him shun all company, and, as I am told, set him weeping like a child upon the "least accident. Is not this a melancholy situation for so lofty and vehement a "spirit as his? And is it not even an addition to his unhappiness that he retains "his senses? It was a rash experiment, that of repelling the gout, which threw him "into this state of mind; and perhaps a hearty fit of it may again prove a cure to "him." The philosopher's prediction was verified.

to the Bedfords, whom the resolute Rigby held together, before significant honours began to gather round Townshend. His

brother, Lord Townshend, was made Lord Lieutenant of  
 1767. Ireland ("I am told," writes Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot,  
 Æt. 39. "Lord Townshend openly ascribes his promotion entirely  
 "to Lord Bute"); his wife was dignified with a peerage as Pitt's  
 had heretofore been, and the common talk had fixed upon himself  
 for First Minister: when suddenly, on the 4th of September,  
 1767, being then only forty-two, he died of a neglected fever; in  
 the changes consequent on his death, the compact confederacy of  
 Bedfords, leaving George Grenville in the lurch, marched boldly  
 into office; and the manœuvrings and intrigues so long in progress,  
 to the disgrace of every one concerned, received their shameless  
 consummation in what was called the Grafton Ministry.

It was a triumph for royalty, in spite of the Bedfords. "In a  
 "great meeting lately," writes Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot, "Lord  
 "Bute's health was proposed in a bumper. It will be a surprise  
 "to you certainly, if that noble lord should again come into  
 "fashion, and openly avow his share of influence, and be openly  
 "courted by all the world!" Chatham had once more retired to  
 Bath, and was in no respect consulted. Conway was to hold  
 office till the beginning of the following year, and then make way  
 for the Bedford nominee, Lord Weymouth; Lord Sandwich and  
 his old friend Dashwood, now Lord Le Despencer, were to be  
 joint Postmasters-General, Rigby to be Paymaster, and Lord  
 Gower President of the Council: while, with these men, so long  
 as the name of Chatham could be kept to conjure with, Camden  
 was to continue to be associated as Chancellor, and Shelburne as  
 Secretary of State. Such ill-omened arrangements, which every  
 other man with a sense of public decency execrated, were pre-  
 cisely what the King desired; and when the Chancellorship of the  
 Exchequer was accepted by Lord North, and Mr. Charles Jenkin-  
 son (many years later created Lord Liverpool) was made a Lord  
 of the Treasury, the royal satisfaction may be supposed to have  
 been complete.

North was the son of the Princess dowager's intimate friend Lord Guildford : and scandal had not hesitated to find a reason for the extraordinary resemblance he presented to the King, in his clumsy figure, homely face, thick lips, light complexion and hair, bushy eyebrows, and protruding large grey eyes ; which, as Walpole says, rolled about to no purpose, for he was utterly short-sighted.\* But he was an abler man than the King, and had too many good as well as amiable qualities for the service in which he now consented to enlist them. He was a man of wit and very various knowledge ; underneath his heavy exterior, singularly awkward manners,† and what seemed to be a perpetual tendency to fall asleep, he concealed great promptness of parts, and an aptitude for business not a little extraordinary ; while the personal disinterestedness of his character, and the unalterable sweetness of his temper, carried him undoubtedly through more public faults and miscarriages, with less of private hatred or dislike, than fell to any minister's lot before or since his time. If he helped to ruin his country, he did it with the most perfect good-humour ; and was always ready to surrender the profit as well as the credit of it, to "the King's private junto."

Of that private junto Charles Jenkinson was the most active member. He had belonged to every ministry of the reign, except Lord Rockingham's. Now a year older than Goldsmith, he had started his public career as Goldsmith did, by writing in the *Monthly Review* ; but, tiring of the patronage of a bookseller, and discovering that whiggery was not the way to court, he wheeled suddenly round to toryism, offered his services to Lord Bute, and became the favourite's private secretary. Men grievously belied

\* Lord Mahon remarks upon this defect of sight in Lord North as "a great obstacle in the way of parliamentary eminence, which has never perhaps been wholly overcome, except by himself, and in our own time by Lord Derby." *History*, v. 254.

† "The noble lord who spoke last," says Burke, not many days before North obtained the highest place in the government, "after extending his right leg a full yard before his left, rolling his flaming eyes, and moving his ponderous frame, has at length opened his mouth !" *Parl. Hist.* xvi. 720. Imagine a leading orator venturing on such a sally in our present House of Commons !

him, if he was not thenceforward the secret fetcher and carrier between Bute, the Princess, the House of Commons, and the King: nor did they scruple to say, that, by the lines of prudent caution

in his face, by his stealthy, inscrutable, down-looking eyes  
1767.  
Æt. 39. (people who had read *Gil Blas* would call him pious Signor

Ordonnez), by the twinkling dark-lantern motion of his half-closed eyelids while he spoke, and by the absence of everything that savoured of imagination in him,\* nature had seemed to mark him out for precisely such a service. His principles were simply what I have stated those of the junto to be; and were now most pithily expressed by Lord Barrington, the existing Secretary at War, who, while Lord North yet hesitated on the brink of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, had eagerly volunteered to take the office. "The King has long known," said the worthy Secretary, "that I am entirely devoted to him; having no political connection with any man, being determined never to form one, and conceiving that in this age the country and its constitution are best served by an unbiassed attachment to the crown." Amen, amen! The Monarch is great and we are his Prophets, cried Mr. Jenkinson and his followers.

And this was the close. To establish such a system as this, had cost the many public scandals of the last seven years; the disgraces of eminent men, the disruptions of useful friendships, the violations of private as of public honour. For this, the country had been deluged with libels; and men of station had put forth against their quondam associates, lampoons unapproachable in scurrile violence by the lowest gazetteers of Grub-street or the Fleet. Nor was that part of the mischief to end with the mischief it helped to create. The poisoned chalice was to have its ingredients commended to other lips; and already had significant indication been given that the lesson of libellous instruction

\* See Wraxall's *Hist. Memoirs*, ii. 209-10. The story is preserved of his having said, in answer to some one who had called him "that evil genius who lurks behind the throne," "Mr. Speaker, I am *not* an evil genius; I am not lurking behind the throne. I again repeat, I am not an evil genius, but the member for Rye in every respect whatsoever" (this last a familiar phrase of his). Moore's *Diary*, iv. 39.



would be taught to a wider school. One of Lord Sandwich's hired and paid libellers, parson Scott, had by the pungent slang of his letters (signed Anti-Sejanus) raised the sale of the *Public Advertiser* from fifteen hundred to three thousand a day; but <sup>1767.</sup>  
<sub>Æt. 39.</sub> letters of higher as well as more piquant strain had succeeded his in that respectable journal, and seemed to threaten no quiet possession to the power so lately seized. This new writer had as yet taken no settled signature, nor were his compositions so finished or powerful as those which made memorable the signature he took some twelve months later; but there was something in his writing, even now, which marked it out from the class it belonged to. There was a strong individual grasp of the matters on which he wrote, a familiar scorn of the men he talked about, and a special hatred of the junto of King's-friends. His fervent abuse of the statesmen, such as Chatham, whom he afterwards exalted, has not been sufficiently referred to their existing relations with that faction which he hated with a private as well as public hatred; and which also at this time as bitterly arrayed against Chatham the brothers-in-law with whom he afterwards so cordially acted. It was as clear, from the first three letters of this writer, that he knew the "atoms" and their "original creating cause," and that in the thick of "its own webs" he had seen "the venomous spider;" as it seems to me now to be proved, if the strongest circumstantial as well as internal evidence can be held to prove anything, that he was throughout all his correspondence employed in the War-office, under that model King's-friend Lord Barrington himself.\* But be this as it might, his letters, variously

\* Since this remark was made in my first edition, the discussion as to the authorship of *Junius* has been re-opened, chiefly by an able writer in the *Athenæum*, who has given great study to the subject, and in illustrating it has thrown much valuable light on the political and personal history of the time. Lord Mahon has treated it at some length in his *History*, and other writers have largely engaged in it. This is, of course, no place for such an argument, but the belief that Francis was the man is so strongly stated in the course of my narrative, that I am in a manner bound to say whether or not, after all the recent discussion, it remains unaltered. Whilst I admit that such is the fact, I may add that I have not the same belief which I had formerly in the authenticity of all the letters with the various signatures ascribed to Junius to be found in Woodfall's edition. 1852. Since this note was written Mr. Herman



and oddly signed, had thus early excited attention ; and would sufficiently, with other indications, have foretold the coming storm, even if the arch-priest of mischief had not suddenly himself  
<sup>1767.</sup>  
 arrived. Coolly, as if no outlawry existed, Wilkes crossed  
 Æt. 39. over to London ; and his first careless business was to send an exquisite French letter to Garrick addressed as to Master Kitley, to ask him how he felt since his reconciliation with his wife. But none knew better than his quondam friend Sandwich what other business he was likely to have in hand. Though he had declined during the summer a " genteel letter " from Paoli, offering him a regiment in Corsica to advance the cause of liberty, he had put himself in motion at the first reasonable prospect of another campaign for liberty (and Wilkes) at home. No one could doubt that the struggle would be a sharp one, and the first care of ministers was directed to the press.

Excellent reasons existed therefore, as I have thus attempted to explain, for the great stress and storm which was now making itself felt in Downing-street. A necessity had unexpectedly appeared for better writers than the ordinary party hacks ; the new and formidable pen in the *Public Advertiser* was piercing the sides of ministers from week to week ; and the question naturally occurred to those ingenious gentlemen whether they might not, after all, become patrons of literature very serviceably to themselves. And hence it is that I am to introduce no less a person than a minister of the church, and chaplain to a minister of state, on a visit to the Temple to pay his respects to Goldsmith on his return from Canonbury-tower.

Parson Scott, Sandwich's chaplain, was now busily going about to negotiate for writers ; and a great many years afterwards, when

Merivale has made an important contribution to the literature of *Junius* by editing and completing the late Mr. Joseph Parkes's collections for a *Life of Sir Philip Francis*. Mr. Merivale's share in this book indeed goes far to settle whatever of the question remained undetermined ; and much interest belongs independently to the impression formed from a thorough examination of Sir Philip's letters by so acute and practised an intellect. I have warmly to thank Mr. Merivale for permitting me to publish at the close of this chapter a memorandum upon the Francis Papers, drawn up at my request. (*Post*, p. 73.) See also, *post*, Book IV. Chapters iv. and xi.

he was a rich old Doctor of Divinity, related an anecdote which was to illustrate the folly of men who are ignorant of the world, and the particular and egregious folly of the author of the *Traveller*. He describes himself applying to Goldsmith, among <sup>1767.</sup> others, to induce him to write in favour of the administration. <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> "I found him," he said, "in a miserable set of chambers in 'the Temple. I told him my authority; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions; and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say, 'I can earn as much as 'will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance you offer is therefore unnecessary to me.' And so I left him," added the Rev. Dr. Scott indignantly, "in his garret." \*

An impatience very natural to the holy man (who within four years had his reward in two fat crown livings), as a like emotion had been to Hawkins, the respectable Middlesex magistrate; but on the other hand, a patience very natural to Goldsmith, and well worthy of remembrance. He knew, if ever man did, the chances he embraced in rejecting that offer. It is an easy transition from what the ministry were willing to do, if they could get return in kind, to what, in the opposite case, they found it impossible to do. Poor Smollett had lately returned from foreign travel with shattered health and spirits, which he had vainly attempted to recruit in his native Scottish air; and, feeling that a milder climate

\* The late Mr. Basil Montagu heard this statement from Dr. Scott himself. "A few months before the death of Dr. Scott, author of *Anti-Sejanus* and other political tracts in support of Lord North's administration, I happened to dine with him in company with my friend Sir George Tnhill, who was the Doctor's physician. After dinner Dr. Scott mentioned, as matter of astonishment and a proof of the folly of men who are according to common opinion ignorant of the world, that he was once sent with a *carte blanche* from the ministry to Oliver Goldsmith to induce him to write in favour of the administration, &c. &c." That the ministers at this time made such the condition of any favour granted by them to literary men, I could give many proofs. Poor Hugh Kelly will hereafter be seen to lose what little popularity he had acquired with audiences at the theatre, because he had so to work for a ministerial pittance; and even Johnson himself complained to Gerard Hamilton that "his pension having been given to him as a literary character, he had been applied to by the administration to write political pamphlets; and he was even so much irritated, that he declared his resolution to resign his pension. His friend showed him the impropriety of such a measure, and he afterwards expressed his gratitude, and said he had received good advice." *Boswell*, v. 255.

was his only hope, was now preparing again to go abroad for probably the last time, with hardly a hope of recovery and very scanty means of support. He stated his case to Hume, and

<sup>1767.</sup>  
Hume went to Lord Shelburne. The matter was very simple.

<sup>Æt. 39.</sup>

The consulships of Leghorn and of Nice were both vacant at this very time; and, could either be obtained for Smollett, there might yet be hope for his broken health, or for quiet and repose till death should come. But this could not be. Just as when Gray, having solicited from Lord Bute the office to which he had so righteous a claim, found it promised to the tutor of Sir James Lowther, so, as to Hume's petition, Nice had "long been pre-engaged" by Lord Shelburne to the Spanish ambassador, Leghorn was under similar pledge to a friend of lawyer Dunning's, and there was no possibility of help for the author of *Peregrine Pickle*.<sup>\*</sup> In that state he was left till the following summer; when, with the prospect now certain which earlier he had hoped might be averted, he wrote to bid Hume farewell before departing to "perpetual exile;"<sup>†</sup> and Hume could only grieve and say to his brother man-of-letters, that "the indifference of ministers towards literature, which has been long, and indeed always, the case in England, gives little prospect of any alteration in this particular."<sup>‡</sup> There was nothing for it but that this writer of genius, worn out in the service of booksellers, to whom his labours had been largely profitable; of the public, whose hours of leisure or of pain he had lightened; and of patrons, who at his utmost need deserted him;

<sup>\*</sup> See Letter in Burton's *Hume*, ii. 406.

<sup>†</sup> "With respect to myself," he writes, "I am sorry I cannot have the pleasure of taking leave of you in person, before I go into perpetual exile. I sincerely wish you all health and happiness. In whatever part of the earth it may be my fate to reside, I shall always remember with pleasure, and recapitulate with pride, the friendly intercourse I have maintained with one of the best men, and undoubtedly the best writer of the age.

'Nos patriam fugimus: tu Tityre, lentus in umbrâ,

'Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas.'

Smollett to Hume, 31st of Aug. 1768. Burton's *Life*, ii. 419.

<sup>‡</sup> Burton's *Hume*, ii. 420. There are some interesting notices of Smollett (to one of them I have referred in a previous page) scattered through the *Autobiography* of Carlyle, who had the honour to be introduced by name in *Humphrey Clinker*.



should pass abroad to labour and to die. One year longer he stayed in England; published and proclaimed, in his last political romance, the universal falsehood of faction, his own remorse for having helped to sustain it, his farewell to the "rascally <sup>1787.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> age," and the contempt for the Chathams as well as Butes it had for ever inspired him with; and in another year, having meanwhile written *Humphrey Clinker*, was buried in the churchyard at Leghorn.

NOTE BY HERMAN MERIVALE, ESQ, ON THE PAPERS OF SIR PHILIP FRANCIS, IN CONNECTION WITH THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE LETTERS OF JUNIUS. (*Ante*, 70.)

I REGARD the authorship of Junius, by Francis, as proved to reasonable satisfaction by the arguments which long ago seemed conclusive to most of our literary men of eminence who have carefully examined the subject. I will proceed to say in what respects I think that the Francis papers, as studied and communicated to the public by the late Mr. Parkes and myself, corroborate the previously known proofs.

1. It is to my mind a singularly significant fact, that, in all this mass of papers (Francis having been a very voluminous diarist, correspondent, and memorandum writer, and having been conversant with the subjects and familiar with the personages treated of in Junius), not a passage was discovered inconsistent on the face of it with the supposition that Francis was Junius, or raising the supposition that any other person was so.

2. The papers showed very numerous instances in which it was plain that Francis had the same subjects of interest in his mind which were treated at the same time in corresponding passages of Junius.

3. They showed, moreover, that the personal movements of Francis during the Junius period corresponded with singular accuracy with those of Junius; that when Francis was ill, Junius flagged; that when Francis left town (which he rarely did), there was a delay in the issue of Junius, sometimes such as to call forth the remarks of his opponents in the press. And (to resume the negative line of evidence) they showed no case in which Francis *could* not (physically) have written any letter of Junius; and no case in which he could not have had the opportunity of knowing the facts which Junius alleged.

4. They strongly corroborated what was known before of the early connection of Francis with Chatham, his dependence on Chatham as his chief through Calcraft, his ambitious expectations of obtaining power through Chatham, and his consequent devotion of all his energies—as long as there was a chance—to the object of setting Chatham up again; to which object Junius was equally devoted.

5. They also confirm Macaulay's admirable divination respecting the similarity of character between Junius and Francis, although he knew so much less of Francis than we now do; his rancour, his ingratitude, his immense self-opinion, his secretiveness, and yet, with all this, a residue of strong public spirit and honourable feeling.

6. This parallel comes out in remarkable coincidences, which cannot be developed except at length. Take one of the most striking. Junius uses very scurrilous language about Calcraft. It has been very plausibly argued that Junius, therefore,



could not have been Francis, inasmuch as Calcraft was Francis's patron and benefactor. True; but Francis uses precisely similar language about Calcraft in one of his own most private memoranda, never disclosed till after his death.

1767. 7. Francis's demeanour about his "secret" I do not profess to explain, nor in *Æt.* 39. truth does it seem to me of much consequence in this matter. For whoever wrote Junius must have been equally reticent and mysterious. But thus much occurs to me. Francis was cautiously silent on the subject for many years; carefully mutilating his own most private papers in passages likely, if discovered, to afford a clue. The main reason for this—independent of the general dislike that a man would have to be known as Junius—I believe to have been his position with Lord Barrington. Him he had insulted more grievously than any one else. But they remained friends, and continued so while Francis was in India, and for years after Francis's return. Francis visited at his house, and so forth. While Lord Barrington was alive Francis could not have avowed himself Junius without utter damnation. But Lord Barrington lived till after 1790, when Francis was becoming an old man. After that event, suspicions begin to grow; but not until the appearance of Taylor's first pamphlet, in 1812, do they become serious. Then the vanity of Francis gets the better of him, and though he does not own to Junius, he evidently enjoys the imputation.

8. Was Francis author of the great number of "miscellaneous" letters included in the Woodfall collection, and of the far more numerous letters and newspaper articles which Parkes attributes to him? I cannot say my mind is made up on this. All I can say is, his industry was very great indeed; his habit of composition so inveterate, that he really could not help writing long minutes and papers for his own amusement when he could no longer send them to the press; and though the merits of these newspaper productions are very various, yet there are few which in themselves seem to me to betray difference of hand. The difficulty is, if he had associates of any consequence, to say who they could have been, considering the habitual secrecy of his operations. Rosenhagen, possibly, was one.

9. Did any one know that he was writing Junius? If any one, probably three: Calcraft (who died 1772), Doyly (who was, if so, a confederate), and H. S. Woodfall (who had strong professional cause for silence). But, although I think there are probabilities in favour of the supposition, I am by no means convinced of it.

10. As to style, certainly the superiority of that of Junius to anything I knew of Francis was with me, for a long time, the ground of a lingering doubt of their identity. And though now convinced of this, I still regard it as a singular circumstance. But I think Francis's papers, as published in my volumes, do raise him nearer to a level with the *best* Junius than anything known of him before, and quite to a level with the inferior portions of Junius; and I think that, on similar grounds of alleged inequality in productions from the same hand, as good a case might be made to show that Butler did not write Hudibras, nor Bunyan the Pilgrim's Progress.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### CLOSE OF A TWELVE YEARS' STRUGGLE.

1767.

SUCH a possible fate as that of poor Smollett, common in all times in England and at this time nearly universal, was something to reflect upon in those Garden-court chambers, which Mr. Scott, swelling with his brace of livings, can only deign to call a "garret." A poor enough abode they were, scarcely perhaps deserving a less contemptuous name; and here Goldsmith found himself, after twelve years of hard struggle, doubtless unable at all times to repress, what is so often the unavailing bitterness of the successful as well as unsuccessful man, the consideration of what he had done, compared with what he might have done.\* The chances still remain, nevertheless, that he might not have done it; and the greater probability is that most people do what they are qualified to do, in the condition of existence imposed upon them. It is very doubtful to me, upon the whole, if Goldsmith, placed as he was throughout life, could have done better than he did. Beginning with not even the choice which Fielding admits was his, of hackney writer or hackney coachman, he has fought his way at last to consideration and esteem. But he bears upon him the scars of his twelve years' conflict; of the mean sorrows through which he has passed, and of the

\* "He observed," says Dr. Maxwell, in the most interesting Collectanea of Johnson's sayings contributed to *Boswell* (iii. 145), "it was a most mortifying reflection for any man to consider *what he had done*, compared with what *he might have done*."

cheap indulgences he has sought relief and help from. There is nothing plastic in his nature now. He is forty. His manners and habits are completely formed; and in them any further success can make little favourable change, whatever it may effect for his mind or his genius. The distrusts which were taught him in his darkest humiliations, cling around him still; and, by the fitful changes and sudden necessities which have encouraged the weakness of his natural disposition, his really generous and most affectionate nature will still continue to be obscured. It was made matter of surprise and objection against him, that though his poems are replete with fine moral sentiments and bespeak a great dignity of mind, yet he had no sense of the shame, nor dread of the evils of poverty.\* How should he? and to what good end? Would it have been wisely done to engage in a useless conflict, to contest with what too plainly was his destiny, and gnaw the file for ever? It is true that poverty brings along with it many disreputable compliances, disingenuous shifts and resources, most dire and sordid necessities; much, that, even while it helps to vindicate personal independence, may not be consistent with perfect self-respect. It is not a soil propitious to virtue and straightforwardness, often as they hardily grow there; and it is well that it should be escaped from as soon as may be.† But there are worse evils. There is a worse subjection to poverty than the mere ceasing to regard it with dread or with shame. There is that submission to it which is implied in a servile adulation of wealth, to the exclusion of every sense of disgrace but that of being poor; and there is, on the other hand, a familiarity with

\* Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, 420.

† There is nothing more impressive in Johnson than the way in which he always speaks of poverty. "Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it." To Boswell. March 28, 1782. "Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided." To Boswell. June 3, 1762. "Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness; it certainly destroys liberty; and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult." To Boswell. Dec. 7, 1782.

it, a careless but not unmanly relation with its wants and shames, which, rightly used, may leave infinite enduring pleasure for its every transitory pain. Where is to be found, for example, such an intimate knowledge of the poor, such ready and <sup>1767.</sup> hearty sympathy with their joys and sorrows, such a strong <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> social sentiment with what the kindest observers too little heed, such zeal for all that can impart

An hour's importance to the poor man's heart,

as in Goldsmith's writings? It is the real dignity of mind which only poverty can teach so well; and when his friends admired it in his books, they might have questioned the value of their accompanying regret.\* Genius often effects its highest gains in a balance of what the world counts for disadvantage and loss; and it has fairly been made matter of doubt, if Pope's body had been less crooked, whether his verses would have been so straight. In every man, wealthy or poor in fortune or in genius, we see the result of the many various circumstances which have made him what he is; wisdom finds its aptest exercise in a charitable consideration of all those circumstances; and, so far as any such result is discovered to have profited and pleased mankind, they will not be unwise to accept it in compensation for whatever pain or disadvantage may have happened to attend it.

The last section of Goldsmith's life and adventures is now arrived at; and in what remains to be described there will appear more strange inconsistencies than have yet been noted. The contrast which every man might be made more or less to illustrate,

\* Let me quote from Letter cxix. in the *Citizen of the World*. "The misfortunes of the great, my friend, are held up to engage our attention, are enlarged upon in tones of declamation, and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers: they have at once the comfort of admiration and pity . . . The miseries of the poor are, however, entirely disregarded; though some undergo more real hardships in one day than the great in their whole lives. It is indeed inconceivable what difficulties the meanest English sailor or soldier endures without murmuring or regret. Every day is to him a day of misery, and yet he bears his hard fate without repining!" I could multiply such passages infinitely from Goldsmith's writings. With his ever genial and humorous delight in the little humble gaieties and thrifty enjoyments of the poor, all his readers are familiar.



of circumstances and pretensions, of ignorance and knowledge, of accomplishments and blunders, will, for the few years to come, take more decisive shape and greater prominence in Goldsmith. <sup>1767.</sup> He will be more seen in a society for which his <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> habits have least adapted him, and where the power to make mirth of his foibles was held to be but fair consolation for the inability to make denial of his genius. "Magnanimous Goldsmith, "a gooseberry fool!"\* His reputation had been silently widening, in the midst and in despite of his humbler drudgery; his poem, his novel, his essays, had imperceptibly but steadily enlarged the circle of his admirers; and he was somewhat suddenly, at last, subjected to the social exactions that are levied on literary fame. But let the reader take along with him into these scenes what will alone enable him to judge them rightly.

Conversation is a game where the wise do not always win. When men talk together, the acute man will count higher than the subtle man; and he who, though infinitely far from truth, can handle a solid point of argument, will seem wiser than the man around whom truth "plays like an atmosphere," but who cannot reason as he feels. The one forms opinions unconsciously, the other none for which he cannot show specific grounds; and it was not inaptly, though humorously, said by Goldsmith of himself, that he disputed best when nobody was by, and always got the better when he argued alone.† Society exposed him to continual misconstruction; so that few more touching things have been recorded of him than those which have most awakened laughter. "People

\* His "magnanimous" evidence against himself in the poem of *Retaliation*.

† An expression which exactly recalls what Addison is reported to have said of himself when some one remarked how much happier in conversation Steele was than the majority of those who talked with him. "Yes," said Addison, "he beats me in the room, but no sooner has he got to the bottom of the staircase than I have refuted all his arguments." "I have only ninepence in my pocket," he said on another occasion, distinguishing between his conversation and his writing, "but I can draw for a thousand pounds." Langton repeated this saying to Johnson, whereupon Boswell pleasantly reports: JOHNSON. "He had not that retort ready, sir; he 'had prepared it beforehand.' LANGTON (turning to me). 'A fine surmise. Set 'a thief to catch a thief.'" vii. 198.

"are greatly mistaken in me," he remarked on one occasion. "A notion goes about that when I am silent, I mean to be impudent; but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence arises "from bashfulness."\* From the same cause arose the un-<sup>1767.</sup>considered talk,† which was less easily forgiven than silence; <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> with which we shall find so frequently mixed up, the imputations of vanity and of envy; and to properly comprehend which, there must always be kept in mind the grudging and long-delayed recognition of his genius. Exceptions no doubt there were. Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds were large exceptions; and with what excellent effect upon his higher nature a sense of his growing fame with such men as these descended, will hereafter be plainly seen. Never is success obtained, if deserved, that it does not open and improve the mind; and never had Goldsmith reason to believe the world in any respect disposed to do him justice, that he was not also most ready and desirous to do justice to others. But, even with the friends I have named, there remained too much of the fondness of pity, the familiarity of condescension, the air of generosity, the habit of patronage; too readily did these appear to justify an ill-disguised contempt, a sort of corporate spirit of disrespect,‡ in the rest of the men-of-letters of that circle; and when was the applause of even the highest, yet counted a sufficient set-off against the depreciation of the lowest of mankind?

No one who thus examines the whole case can doubt, I think, that Goldsmith had never cause to be really content with his position among the men of his time, or with the portion of celebrity at any period during his life assigned to him. All men can patronise the useful, since it so well caters for itself, but, many as there are to need the beautiful, there are few to set it forth, and fewer still to encourage it; and even the booksellers who crowded round the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the *Traveller*, came to

\* Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, 418-19.

† Even Johnson lost patience at this one day, and growled out, "If nobody was suffered to abuse poor Goldy but those who could write as well, he would have few enemies." *Europ. Mag.* xxxi. 18.

talk but of booksellers' drudgery and catchpenny compilations. Is it strange that as such a man stood amid the Boswells, Murphys,

Beatties, Bickerstaffs, Grahams, Kellys, Hawkinses, and  
 1767.  
 æt. 39. men of that secondary class, unconscious comparative criticism should have risen in his mind, and taken the form of a very innocent vanity? It is a harsh word, yet often stands for a harmless thing. May it not even be forgiven him if, in galling moments of slighting disregard, he made occasional silent comparison of *Rasselas* with the *Vicar*, of the *Rambler* with the *Citizen of the World*, of *London* with the *Traveller*? "Doctor, "I should be glad to see you at Eton," said Mr. George Graham, one of the Eton masters and author of an indifferent *Masque of Telemachus*,\* as he sat at supper with Johnson and Goldsmith, indulging somewhat freely in wine, and arrived at that pitch in his cups, when he gave this invitation, of looking at one man and talking to another. "I shall be glad to wait upon you," answered Goldsmith. "No, no," replied Graham: "'tis not you I mean, Doctor *Minor*; 'tis Doctor *Major*, there."† "Now, that Graham," said Goldsmith afterwards, "is a fellow to make one commit suicide;" and upon nothing graver than expressions such as this, have men like Hawkins inferred that he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts. "Indeed," pursues the musical knight, "he once entreated a friend to desist from praising him; 'for in doing so,' said he, 'you harrow up my

\* If any one would judge how far such a person as this Graham was entitled to address contemptuously such a man as Goldsmith, let him turn to a letter in the *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 193-5.

† *Boswell*, iv. 98. Mrs. Piozzi had told the anecdote before him with the addition that Goldsmith was so eager to respond to the invitation that he "proposed setting out with Mr. Johnson for Buckinghamshire in a fortnight" (180). She had heard it from Johnson, who used to tell the story himself; and "what effect," he would say in conclusion, "this had on Goldsmith, who was as irascible as a hornet, may be easily conceived." Mr. Croker has justly remarked that out of it, and the epithet *Ursa Major* applied to Johnson by Boswell's father, Miss Reynolds had evidently manufactured the anecdote told in her *Recollections* (Croker's *Boswell*, 831.) "At another time, a gentleman who was sitting between Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith, and with whom he had been disputing, remarked to another, loud enough for Goldsmith to hear him, 'That he had a fine time of it, between *Ursa major* and *Ursa minor*!'"

“‘soul : ’” \* which it may be admitted was not at all improbable, if it was Hawkins praising him ; for there is nothing so likely as a particular sort of praise to harrow up an affectionate soul. Such most certainly was Goldsmith’s, and he loved <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub>

\* *Life of John* 417. Hawkins appears to have coolly copied this absurd imputation on Goldsmith’s sense, as well as his humanity and gratitude, from Tom Davies’s *Life of Garrick* (ii. 151). Tom is its first author, and uses the very expression employed by Hawkins : “ No more, I desire you ; you harrow up my soul.” See note above, and *ante*, i. 421-2. So, again, Hawkins’s statement is put in a general form by Beattie, who had no personal knowledge of the matter at all ; and thus it is that mere unauthorised repetitions come to be quoted as additional testimony, and one ill-natured idle remark is the seed-plot of a forest of misstatements. Beattie’s remark is in a letter to Forbes (*Life*, iii. 49), of the 10th July, 1788. “ What she” (Mrs. Piozzi in her letters) “ says of Goldsmith is perfectly true. He was the only “ person I ever knew who acknowledged himself to be envious. In Johnson’s presence “ he was quiet enough, but in his absence expressed great uneasiness on hearing him “ praised. He even envied the dead ; he could not bear that Shakespeare should be “ so much admired as he is. There might, however, be something like magnanimity “ in envying Shakespeare and Dr. Johnson ; as in Julius Cæsar’s weeping to think, “ that at an age at which he had done so little, Alexander should have done so much. “ But surely Goldsmith had no occasion to envy me ; which however he certainly “ did, for he owned it (though when we met, he was always very civil) ; and I re- “ ceived undoubted information that he seldom missed an opportunity of speaking ill “ of me behind my back.” The copy of Forbes’s book from which I quote, having belonged to Mrs. Piozzi, is full of manuscript notes in her quaint, clear, beautiful hand ; and to one of them, written at least thirty-three years after Goldsmith’s death (the imprint to the edition is 1807), she subjoins the description of her old friend which appeared afterwards in her rhymed account of the Streatham portraits.

“ From our Goldsmith’s anomalous character, who  
Can withhold his contempt and his reverence too ?  
From a poet so polished, so paltry a fellow  
From critic, historian, or vile Punchinello !  
From a heart in which meanness had made her abode,  
From a foot that each path of vulgarity trod,  
From a head to invent and a hand to adorn,  
Unskilled in the schools, a philosopher born,  
By disguise undefended, by jealousy smit,  
This *lusus naturæ*, nondescript in wit,  
May best be compared to those Anamorphoses  
Which for lectures to ladies th’ optician proposes :  
All deformity seeming in some points of view,  
In others quite accurate, regular, true :  
Till the Student no more sees the figure that shock’d her  
But, all in his Likeness, *our odd little Doctor.*”

My readers will have no difficulty in discerning, through the laboured vivacity and forced antithesis of these indifferent lines, the small admixture of truth contained in them.



with all his grateful heart whatever was lovable in Johnson. Boswell himself admits it, on more than one occasion; and contradicts much of what he has chosen to say on others, <sup>1767.</sup> by the remark that in his opinion Goldsmith had not really <sub>Act. 39.</sub> more of envy than other people, but only talked of it freely.\*

That free talking did all the mischief. He was candid and simple enough to say aloud what others would more prudently have concealed. "Here's such a stir," he exclaimed to Johnson one day, in a company at Thrale's,—it was when London had gone mad about Beattie's commonplace *Essay on Truth*, had embraced the author as "the long-delayed avenger of insulted "Christianity," and had treated, flattered, and caressed him at last into a pension of £200 a year,—“here's such a stir about a “fellow that has written one book, and I have written many.” “Ah, Doctor!” retorted Johnson on his discontented, disregarded, unpensioned friend, “there go two-and-forty sixpences, you know, “to one guinea:”† whereat the lively Mrs. Thrale claps her hands with delight, and poor Goldsmith can but sulk in a corner. Being an author, it is true, he had no business to be thus thin-skinned, and should rather have been shelled like a rhinoceros; but a stronger man than he was might have fretted under the irritation of such doubtful wit, and been driven to even intemperate resentment. Into that he never was betrayed. With all that at various times, and in differing degrees, depressed his honest ambition, ruffled his pride, or invaded his self-respect, it will on the whole be sufficiently plain, by the time this narrative is closed, that no man more thoroughly, and even in his own despite, practised those gracious and golden maxims with which Edmund Burke this very year rebuked the hasty temper of his protégé Barry, and which every man should take for ever to his heart. “Who can live in “the world without some trial of his patience?” asked the statesman of the young painter, who had fallen into petty disputes at Rome. And then he warned him that a man never can have a point of mere pride that will not be pernicious to him; that we

\* Boswell, iii. 304.

† Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 179.

must be at peace with our species, if not for their sakes, yet very much for our own; and that the arms with which the ill dispositions of the world are to be combated, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us and we reconciled to it, are <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves; "which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our nature as much as they contribute to our fortune and repose."

Well would it have been for the subject of this biography, if the same justice which the world thus obtained from him, throughout their chequered intercourse, he had been able to obtain either from or for himself. It has not hitherto been concealed that, in whatever respect society may have conspired against him, he is not clear of the charge of having aided it by his own weakness; and still more evident will this be hereafter. With the present year ended his exclusive reliance on the booksellers, and, as though to mark it more emphatically, his old friend Newbery died;\* but with the year that followed, bringing many social seductions in the train of the theatre, came a greater inability than ever to resist improvident temptation and unsuitable expense. His old habit of living merely from day to day beset every better scheme of life; the difficulty with which he earned money had not helped to teach him its value; and he became unable to apportion wisely his labour and his leisure. The one was too violent, and the other too freely indulged. It is doubtful if the charge of gambling can be supported

\* To the last poor Goldsmith's necessities followed him. At the back of a letter addressed to Newbery, dated the 28th March, 1767, in which the writer deplores his worthy publisher's illness, and prays to have his heart rejoiced by the re-establishment of his health, I find sundry pencil marks in Newbery's handwriting, which are probably our last remaining trace of his farewell visit to his favourite Society of Arts, of the jokes he heard there, of the good offices he did there, of the mistakes for which half-learned members got laughed at by the learned there. "You can't lay an egg but you must cackle. Lent Dr. Goldsmith for his instrument, 10s. 6d. Combing the horse's tail. Mr. Hely's mistaking Tully's Latin for bad Latin." This letter forms part of the Newbery MSS. in Mr. Murray's possession frequently referred to in this biography.

to more than a trifling extent: but in the midst of poverty he was too often profuse, into clothes and entertainments he threw money that should have liquidated debts, and he wanted courage <sup>1767.</sup> and self-restraint to face the desperate arrears that still daily <sup>Æt. 39.</sup> mounted up against him. Hardly ever did a new resource arise, that did not bring with it a new waste, and fresh demands upon his jaded powers.

But before we too sternly pronounce upon genius sacrificed thus, and opportunities thrown away, let the forty years which have been described in this biography; the thirty of unsettled habit and undetermined pursuit, the ten of unremitting drudgery and desolate toil; be calmly retraced and charitably judged. Nor let us omit from that consideration the nature to which he was born, the land in which he was raised, his tender temperament neglected in early youth, the brogue and the blunders which he described as his only inheritance; and when the gains are counted up which we owe to his genius, be it still with admission of its native and irreversible penalties. His generous warmth of heart, his transparent simplicity of spirit, his quick transitions from broadest humour to gentlest pathos, and that delightful buoyancy of nature which survived in every depth of misery,—who shall undertake to separate these from the Irish soil in which they grew, where impulse predominates still over reflection and conscience, where unthinking benevolence yet passes for considerate goodness, and the gravest duties of life can be overborne by social pleasure, or sunk in mad excitement? Manful, in spite of all, was Goldsmith's endeavour, and noble its result. He did not again draw back from the struggle in which at last he had engaged; unaided by a helping hand, he fought the battle out; and much might yet have been retrieved when death arrived so suddenly. Few men live at present, properly speaking; but are preparing to live at another time, which may or may not arrive.\* The other time was cut from

\* It is, I think, in one of the admirable letters of either Pope or Swift, that something of this kind is said. Let us humbly remember what sacred authority we have, too, that the will may sometimes be accepted for the deed. "And the Lord," says

under Goldsmith; and out of such labour as his in the present, few men could have snatched time to live. "Ah!" he exclaimed to a young gentleman of fortune, who showed him a very elaborate manuscript: "ah, Mr. Cradock! think of me, that must <sup>1767.</sup>—  
"write a volume every month!"\* Think of him, too, who <sup>Æt. 32.</sup> wrote always in the presence of craving want, and, from his life's beginning to its end, had never known the assistance of a home. Eminently does his disposition seem to me to have been one that the domestic influences would have saved from the worst temptations, soon to be described, which beset his later life, could a happy marriage but have brought within the tranquillising centre of home his desultory tastes, his unsettled habits, his too diffused affections, and eager cravings for applause. It was said of Burke that his every care used to vanish from the moment he entered under his own roof; of himself Goldsmith could say no better than that at home or abroad, in crowds or in solitude, he was still carrying on a conflict with unrelenting care.†

Solomon, "said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an "house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." *Kings*, Book i. viii. 18.

\* "Goldsmith truly said I was nibbling about elegant phrases, whilst he was "obliged to write half a volume." *Cradock's Memoirs*, iv. 288.

† Mr. De Quincey appears to think that he differs from me in these views, but the results at which he arrives are substantially the same, though I cannot take so cheerful a view of the general tenor of Goldsmith's life. Mr. De Quincey, however, is well entitled to be heard. "He enjoyed two great immunities from suffering that have "been much overlooked; and such immunities that, in our opinion, four in five "of all the people ever connected with Goldsmith's works, as publishers, printers, "compositors (that is, men taken at random), have very probably suffered more, "upon the whole, than he. The immunities were these: 1st, from any bodily taint "of low-spirits. He had a constitutional gaiety of heart, an elastic hilarity, and, as "he himself expresses it, 'a knack of hoping,'—which knack could not be bought "with Ormus and with Ind, nor hired for a day with the peacock throne of Delhi. . . "Another immunity he had of almost equal value, and yet almost equally forgotten "by his biographers, viz. from the responsibilities of a family. Wife and children "he had not. They it is that, being a man's chief blessings, create also for him the "deadliest of his anxieties, that stuff his pillow with thorns, that surround his daily "path with snares. . . In short, Goldsmith enjoyed the two privileges, one subjective, "the other objective, which, when uniting in the same man, would prove more than a "match for all difficulties that could arise in a literary career to him who was at once "a man of genius so popular, of talents so versatile, of reading so various, and of oppor- "tunities so large for still more extended reading. The subjective privilege lay in his



But one friend he had that never wholly left him, that in his need came still with comfort. Nature, who smiled upon him in his cradle, in this "garret" of Garden-court had not deserted him. Her school was open to him even here; and, in the crowd and glare of streets, but a step divided him from her cool and calm refreshments.

1767.  
Æt. 39.



Among his happiest hours were those he passed at his window, looking over into the Temple-gardens. Steam and smoke were not yet so all-prevailing, but that, right opposite where he looked, the stately stream which washes the garden-foot might be seen, as though freshly "weaned "from her Twickenham Naiades," flowing gently past. Nor had the benchers thinned the trees in those days; for they were that race of benchers loved

of Charles Lamb, who refused to pass in their treasurer's account "twenty shillings to the gardener for stuff to poison the sparrows." So there he sat, with the noisy life of Fleet-street shut out, and made country music for himself out of the noise of the old Temple rookery.\* Luther used to moralise the rooks; and Goldsmith had

"buoyancy of animal spirits; the objective in his freedom from responsibilities." De Quincey's *Works*, vi. 198-200 (Ed. 1857).

\* So far Goldsmith had at least the advantage of Gray, who in one of the most delightful of all his letters, and which, for its whimsical cordial humour and quiet gaiety, at once contrasts with his pensive contemplative moods and yet takes a certain colour from them too (just as it is the charm of his wit and satire that you can never divorce them from his manly truth and even kindness of feeling), thus compares Norton Nicholls's country refreshments with his own: "*Pembroke College, June 24, 1769.* And so you have a garden of your own, and you plant and transplant, and "are dirty and amused! Are not you ashamed of yourself? Why, I have no such "thing, you monster, nor ever shall be either dirty or amused as long as I live. My "gardens are in the windows, like those of a lodger up three pair of stairs in Petticoat-lane or Camomile-street, and they go to bed regularly under the same roof "that I do. Dear, how charming it must be to walk out in one's own *garding*, and "sit on a bench in the open air, with a fountain and leaden statue, and a rolling "stone, and an arbour: have a care of sore throats, though, and the *agoe*." See the entire letter in the *Works*, iv. 133-4. The reader who is curious in such things will find that the so-called correct version printed by Mr. Mitford from Dawson

illustrious example for the amusement he now took in their habits, as from time to time he watched them. He saw the rookery, in the winter deserted, or guarded only by some five or six "like  
 "old soldiers in a garrison," resume its activity and bustle in <sup>1707.</sup>  
 the spring; and he moralised, like the great reformer, on <sup>Act. 33.</sup>  
 the legal constitutions established, the social laws enforced, and the particular castigations endured for the good of the community, by those black-dressed and black-eyed chatterers. "I have often  
 "amused myself," he says, "with observing their plans of policy  
 "from my window in the Temple, that looks upon a grove where  
 "they have made a colony in the midst of the city." \* Nor will we doubt that also from this wall-girt grove came many a thought that carried him back to childhood, made him free of solitudes explored in boyish days, and re-peopled deserted villages. It was better than watching the spiders amid the dirt of Green-arbour-court; for though his grove was city-planted, and scant of the foliage of the forest, there was Fancy to piece out for him, transcending these, far other groves and other trees,

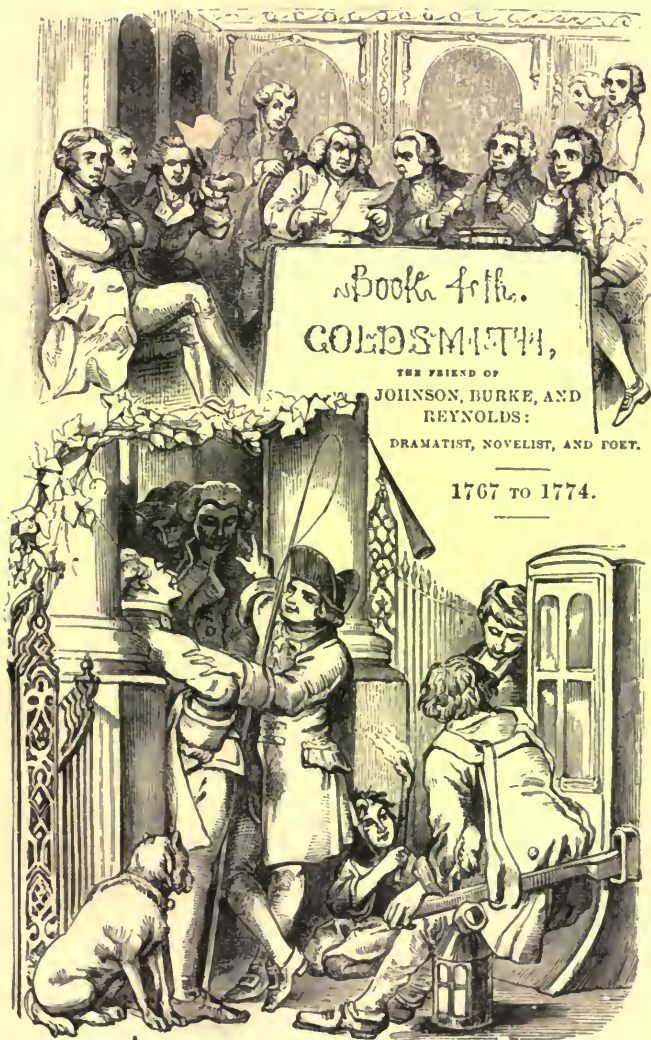
Annihilating all that's made  
 To a green thought in a green shade.

Let us leave him to this happiness for a time, before we pass to the few short years of labour, enjoyment, and sorrow, in which his mortal existence closed.

Turner's MS. (v. 91-2), is altogether inferior to this, as printed by Mason. Yet Mason was in this respect a monstrous offender too, as any one may see who refers to an admirable paper in the *Quarterly Review* (xciv. 1-4), where his villainous habit of adulterating, by way of improving, his friend's letters, is thoroughly exposed. Unpardonable in any case, it was particularly atrocious in that of Gray, who is of all his works the most choice and fastidious in even his most familiar diction.

\* *Animated Nature*, iv. 178-9.









## BOOK THE FOURTH.

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### CHAPTER I.

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#### THE GOOD-NATURED MAN.

1767—1768.

It was little more than a month before the death of the elder Newbery, that Burke read the comedy of the *Good-natured Man*; \* and thus, with mirth and sadness for its ushers; the last division of Goldsmith's life comes in. The bond of service <sup>1767.</sup> <sub>Æt. 39.</sub> so long continued, though chequered with mortifying incidents, could hardly be snapped without regret; nor could the long-attempted trial of the theatre, painful as its outset had been, without something of cheerfulness and hope approach its consummation. Newbery died on the 22nd of December, 1767; and the performance of the comedy was now promised for the 28th of the following January.

Unavailingly, for special reasons, had Goldsmith attempted to get it acted before Christmas. Quarrels had broken out among the new proprietary of the theatre, and these were made excuses for delay. Colman had properly insisted on his <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> right, as manager, to cast the part of *Imogen* to Mrs. Yates,

\* Richard Cumberland's *Memoirs*, i. 364. "His first comedy was read and applauded in its manuscript by Edmund Burke, and the circle in which he then 'lived.'" The hint for the title, as I have stated, occurs in the *Life of Nash*. And see *ante*, i. 303.

rather than to a pretty-faced simpering lady (Mrs. Lessingham) \* whom his brother proprietor, Harris, "protected;" and the violence of the dispute became so notorious, and threatened such danger to the new management, that the papers describe Garrick "growing taller" on the strength of it. Tall enough he certainly grew to overlook something of the bitterness of Colman's first desertion of him; and civilities, perhaps arising from a sort of common interest in the issue of the Lessingham dispute, soon after recommenced between the rival managers. Bickerstaff (a clever and facile Irishman, who, ten years before, had somewhat suddenly thrown up a commission in the Marines, taken to theatrical writing for subsistence, and since obtained repute as the author of *Love in a Village* and the *Maid of the Mill*) was just now pressing Colman with his opera of *Lionel and Clarissa*; and, in one of his querulous letters, seems to point at this resumption of intercourse with Garrick, whom he had himself offended by beginning to write for Colman. "When I talked with you last summer," he complains, writing on the 26th January, 1768, "I told you that it would be impossible to have my opera ready till after Christmas; and named about the 20th January. You received this with great goodness, said you were glad of it, because it would be the best time of the year for me, and then told me that Mr. Goldsmith's play should come out before Christmas; and this you repeated, and assur'd me of, more than once, in subsequent meetings. . . The fact is, you broke your word with me, in ordering the representation of the *Good-natur'd Man* in such a manner, that it must unavoidably interfere with my opera. . . At the reading, it was said the *Good-natur'd Man* should appear the Wednesday after; but at the same time it was whispered to me, that it was privately determined not to bring it out till the Saturday fortnight, and that there was even a promise given to Mr. Kelly that it should not appear till after his nights were over." †

If such a promise had been given (and circumstances justify the

\* This lady began life by sharing Derrick's garret. For a curious account of her, see Taylor's *Records*, i. 5-8.

† MS. *penes me*.

suspicion), Goldsmith had better reason than has been hitherto supposed for that dissatisfaction with Colman and difference with Kelly which attended the performance of his comedy. Kelly had been taken up by Garrick, in avowed and not very generous rivalry to himself <sup>1768.</sup> it was the town talk, some weeks <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> before either performance took place, that the two comedies, written as they were by men well known to each other and who had lived the same sort of life, were to be pitted against each other; and so broadly were they opposed in character and style, that the first in the field, supposing it well received, could hardly fail to be a stumbling-block to its successor. Kelly had sounded the depths of sentimentalism. I have mentioned the origin of that school as of much earlier date; nor can it be doubted that it was with Steele the unlucky notion began, of setting comedy to reform the morals, instead of imitating the manners, of the age. Fielding slyly glances at this when he makes Parson Adams declare the *Conscious Lovers* to be the only play fit for a Christian to see, and as good as a sermon; and in so witty and fine a writer as Steele, so great a mistake is only to be explained by the intolerable grossness into which the theatre had fallen in his day. For often does it happen in such reaction that good and bad suffer together; and that while one has the sting taken out of it, the other loses energy and manhood. Where a sickly sensibility overspreads both vico

\* It is fair at the same time to add that Cooke (who knew both well, and has left us anecdotes about Kelly also printed in the *European Magazine*) says the difference originated before Kelly's comedy was accepted, and was simply owing to the fact that he had presumed to attempt a comedy at all. "He was at this time much acquainted with Goldsmith and Bickerstaff, but except their barely hearing he was engaged that way, he scarcely ever mentioned the subject. . . Goldsmith kept back and was silent; till one day, when asked about Kelly's writing a comedy, he said, 'He knew nothing at all about it—he had heard there was a man of that name about town who wrote in newspapers, but of his talents for comedy, or even the work he was engaged in, he could not judge.' This," adds Cooke, "would be a great drawback on the character of Goldsmith, if it arose from a general principle; but nothing could be further from the truth. He was kind, beneficent, and good-natured in the extreme, to all but those whom he thought his competitors in literary fame; but this was so deeply rooted in his nature, that nothing could cure it. Poverty had no terrors for him; but the applauses paid a brother poet 'made him poor indeed.'" *European Magazine*, xxiv. 422.



and virtue, we are in the right to care as little for the one as for the other; since it is Life that the stage and its actors should present to us, and not anybody's moral or sentimental view of it. A <sup>1763.</sup> most masterly critic of our time, William Hazlitt, has dis-  
<sup>Act. 40.</sup> posed of Steele's pretensions as a comic dramatist; and poor Hugh Kelly, who has not survived to our time, must be disinterred to have his pretensions judged: yet the stage continues to suffer, even now, from the dregs of the sentimental school, and it would not greatly surprise me to see the comedy with which Kelly's brief career of glory began, again lift up a sickly head amongst us.\*

It is not an easy matter to describe that comedy. One can hardly disentangle, from the maze of cant and make-believe in which all the people are involved, what it precisely is they drive at; but the main business seems to be, that there are three couples in search of themselves throughout the five acts, and enveloped in such a haze or mist of *False Delicacy* (the title of the piece) that they do not, till the last, succeed in finding themselves. There is a Lord who has been refused, for no reason on earth, by a Lady Betty who loves him; and who, with as little reason and as much delicacy on his own side, transfers his proposals to a friend of Lady Betty's whom he does not love, and selects her ladyship to convey the transfer. There is Lady Betty's friend, who, being in love elsewhere, is shocked to receive his lordship's proposals; but, being under great obligations to Lady Betty, cannot in delicacy think of opposing what she fancies her ladyship has set her heart upon. There is a mild young gentleman, who is knocked hither and thither like a shuttlecock; now engaged to this young lady whom he does not love, now dismissed by that whom he does; and made at last the convenient means of restoring, with all proper delicacy, Lady Betty to his lordship. There is a young lady who in delicacy ought to marry the mild young gentleman, but indelicately prefers instead to run away

\* Shortly after the publication of these remarks in my first edition (1848) Mr. Farren, attracted by the part of the "slovenly old bachelor" to which I presently advert, announced a proposed revival of the play; but it was afterwards dropped.

with a certain Sir Harry. There is Sally her maid, who tells her mistress that she has transported her poor Sally "by that noble resolution" (to run away). And there is the delicate old Colonel her father, who plays eaves-dropper to her plan of flight; intercepts her in the act of it; gives her, in the midst of her wickedness, £20,000 (which he pulls out of a pocket-book), because he had promised it when she was good; and tells her to banish his name entirely from her remembrance, and be as happy as she can with the consciousness of having broken an old father's heart. There are only two people in the play with a glimmering of common sense or character, an eccentric widow and a slovenly old bachelor: who are there to do for the rest what the rest have no power to do for themselves; and, though not without large infusions of silly sentimentality and squeamish charity, to bring back enough common sense to furnish forth a catastrophe. It is the most mechanical of contrivances: yet it is the proof, if any were wanting, that such a piece has no life in itself; and it is the distinguishing quality, which, thanks to Mr. Kelly's example, in proportion as reality or character is absent from a modern comedy, will still be found its chief resource. Examples need not be cited. Mr. Kelly's style will never want admirers. While it saves great trouble and wit to both actor and author, it exacts from an audience neither judgment nor discrimination; and, with an easy indolent indulgence of such productions, there will always be mixed up a sort of secret satisfaction in their mouthing morals and lip-professions of humanity.

Let us not be so hard on our grandfathers and grandmothers for having taken so mightily to Mr. Kelly's *False Delicacy* as not to admit thus much. It had every advantage, too, in its production. Garrick not only wrote a prologue and epilogue, and was said to have heightened the old bachelor played by King, but went out of his way to induce Mrs. Dancer to forgive the abuse she had received in Mr. Kelly's *Thespis*, and act the widow. Produced on Saturday, the 23rd of January, it was received with such singular favour, that, though the management was under a solemn pledge

“not for the future to run any new piece nine nights successively,” it was played eight nights without intermission, and in the course of the season repeated more than twenty times. The publisher announced, the morning after its publication, that <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> three thousand copies of it had been sold before two o'clock; so unabated did its interest continue, that it had sold ten thousand before the season closed, Kelly had received a public breakfast at the Chapter-coffee-house, and its publisher had expended twenty pounds upon a piece of plate as a tribute to his genius; it was translated into German, and (by order of the Marquis de Pombal) into Portuguese, while its French translation by Garrick's lively friend, Madame Riccoboni, had quite a run in Paris;—and, to sum up all in a word, *False Delicacy* became the rage.

Poor Goldsmith may be forgiven if the sudden start of such successes a little dashed his hope at the last rehearsals of his *Good-natured Man*. Colman had lost what little faith he ever had in it; Powell protested he could do nothing with *Honeywood*; Harris and Rutherford had from the first taken little part in it; \* nor, excepting Shute, were the actors generally more hopeful than the management. Goldsmith always remembered the timely good opinion of that excellent comedian, as well as the praise proffered him by a pretty actress (Miss Wilford, just become Mrs. Bulkley, of whom more hereafter) who played Miss Richland. What stood him most in stead, however, was the unwavering kindness of Johnson, who not only wrote the prologue he had promised, but went to see the comedy rehearsed; and as, some half-century before, Swift had stood by Addison's side at the rehearsal of his tragedy, wondering to hear the drab that played Cato's daughter laughing in the midst of her passionate part, and crying out *What's next?* † one may imagine the equal wonder

\* It is just to add, however, to what has already been stated on this subject (*ante*, 45), that, in his account of his quarrel with his fellow-proprietors, Colman expressly states that they “afterwards declared their entire approbation” of his acceptance of Goldsmith's comedy. *A True State of the Difference*, &c. 18.

† “I was this morning at ten at the rehearsal of Mr. Addison's play, called *Cato*, “which is to be acted on Friday. There were not above half-a-score of us to see it. “We stood on the stage, and it was foolish enough to see the actors prompted every

with which the kind-hearted sage by Goldsmith's side heard the mirth he so heartily admired, and had himself so loudly laughed at, rehearsed with doleful anticipations. The managerial face appears to have lengthened in exact proportion as the fun <sup>1768.</sup> became broad, and when, <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> at the strongest remonstrance, it was finally determined to retain the scene of the bailiffs, Colman afterwards told his friends that he had lost all hope.

The eventful night arrived at last ; Friday, the 29th of January. It was not a club night,\* though the evening of meeting was ultimately altered from Monday to this later day to suit a general convenience ; but a majority of the members, following Johnson's and Reynolds's and Burke's example, attended the theatre, and agreed to close the evening in Gerrard-street. Cooke, now Goldsmith's neighbour in the Temple, and whom he had lately introduced to his Wednesday-club, was also present ; and has spoken of what befell. Mr. Bensley, a stage lover of portentous delivery, seems to have thrown into the heavy opening of Johnson's prologue,

Prest by the load of life, the weary mind  
Surveys the general toil of human kind,

a ponderous gloom, which, at the outset, dashed the spirits of the audience. Nor did Mr. Powell's Honeywood mend matters much, with the more cheerful opening of the play. He had complained, at the rehearsals, that the part gave him "no opportunity of displaying his abilities ;" and this it now became his care to make manifest. "Uniform tameness, not to say insipidity," was his contribution to the illustration of Honeywood. "He seemed, from the

"moment, and the poet directing them ; and the drab" [Mrs. Oldfield] "that acts Cato's daughter out in the midst of a passionate part, and then calling out, 'What's next ?' The Bishop of Clogher was there too ; but he stood privately in a gallery." Swift's *Journal to Stella*, 6th April, 1713. Works, iii. 148.

\* Mrs. Thrale says it was (*Anecdotes*, 244), but her authority is not to be placed against that of Bishop Percy, *post*, chapter iv. 143-4. In Leslie and Taylor's *Life of Reynolds* (i. 283) it is assumed, from the simple entry in his engagement book on this day, "Dr. Goldsmith," that Reynolds "seems to have dined with the anxious author "whom he was always ready to support and encourage," but it is more probable that the entry was to remind himself that the comedy was then to be acted, and that the club were afterwards to meet.



"beginning to the end, to be a perfect disciple of Zeno." Shuter, on the other hand, going to work with Croaker after a different fashion, soon warmed the audience into his own enjoyment; and shocked the sentimentalists among them with the boisterous laughter he sent ringing through the house; nor was he ill seconded by the Lofty of Woodward, another excellent comedian, the effect of whose "contemptuous patronage" of Honeywood was long remembered.\* But then came the bailiffs; on whom, being poorly acted and presenting no resistance that way, the disaffected party were able to take full revenge for what they thought the indelicacy of all such farcical mirth.† Accordingly, when good Mr. Twitch described his love for humanity, and Little Flannigan cursed the French for having made the beer threepence-halfpenny a pot, Cooke tells us that he heard people in the pit cry out this was "low" ("language uncommonly low," said the worthy *London Chronicle* in its criticism),‡ and disapprobation was very loudly expressed. The comedy, in short, was not only trembling in the balance, but the chances were decisively adverse, when Shuter came on with the "incendiary letter" in the

\* I am here quoting lines, and expressions, from the notices of the acting of the comedy in the papers of the week when it appeared.

† "The bailiff and his blackguard followers appeared intolerable on the stage, yet we are not disgusted with them in the perusal" is the admission even of the *Monthly Review* (xxx. 160. February 1768); its notice of the *Good-natured Man* as "an agreeable play to read," immediately following its notice of *False Delicacy* as "a very agreeable play to see."

‡ "This whole scene in which those fellows perpetually joined conversation, in language uncommonly low, gave some offence, and it is hoped the author will for the future wholly omit it." *London Chronicle* for Jan. 28-30, 1768. I need hardly remind the reader of the pleasant use which Goldsmith made of this experience in his second comedy, or of the criticism called forth by Squire Lumpkin's song from the delicate frequenters of the Three Jolly Pigeons. "FIRST FELLOW. The squire has got spunk in him. SECOND FELLOW. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low. THIRD FELLOW O damn anything that is low; I cannot bear it. FOURTH FELLOW. The genteel thing, is the genteel thing at any time. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly. THIRD FELLOW. I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What though I am obligated to dance a bear? a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelst of tunes: 'Water parted,' or 'The minuet in Ariadne.'"

last scene of the fourth act, and read it with such inimitable humour that it carried the fifth act through. To be composed at so truly comic an exhibition, says Cooke, "must have exceeded all power of face; even the rigid moral-mongers <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> "joined the full-toned roll of approbation." Poor Goldsmith, meanwhile, had been suffering exquisite distress; had lost all faith in his comedy, and in himself; and, when the curtain fell, could only think of his debt of gratitude to Shuter. He hurried round to the green-room, says Cooke; "thanked him in his honest, "sincere manner, before all the performers;" and told him "he "had exceeded his own idea of the character, and that the fine "comic richness of his colouring made it almost appear as new to "him as to any other person in the house."\* Then, with little heart for doubtful congratulations, he turned off to meet his friends in Gerrard-street.

By the time he arrived there, his spirits had to all appearance returned. He seemed to have forgotten the hisses. The members might have seen that he took no supper, but he chatted gaily, as if nothing had happened amiss. Nay, to impress his friends still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sung his favourite song, which he never consented to sing but on special occasions, about *An Old Woman tossed in a Blanket seventeen times as high as the Moon*;† and was altogether very noisy and loud. But some time afterwards, when he and Johnson were dining with Perey at the chaplain's table at St. James's, he confessed what his feelings had this night really been; "made," said Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, "a very comical and unnecessarily exact recital" of them;‡ and told how the night had ended. "All this while," he said, "I was suffering horrid tortures; and verily believe that if "I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 96.

† Another version of this famous ditty is supplied in the learned correspondence of Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Montague; but here the old woman is more decorously "drawn "up in a basket three or four leagues, as high as the moon," and what it gains in decorum it seems to lose (as so often happens) in spirit

‡ Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 244-6.

“the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that, and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imaged to themselves the  
 1768. “anguish of my heart. But when all were gone except  
 A.D. 40. “Johnson here, I burst out a-crying, and even swore by —  
 “that I would never write again.” Johnson sat in amazement



while Goldsmith made the confession, and then confirmed it. “All which, “Doctor,” he said, “I thought had “been a secret between you and “me; and I am sure I would not “have said anything about it, for “the world.” That is very certain. No man so unlikely as Johnson, when he had a friend’s tears to wipe away, critically to ask himself, or afterwards discuss, whether or not they ought to have been shed; but none so likely, if they came to be dis-

cussed by others, to tell you how much he despised them. What he says must thus be taken with what he does,\* more especially in all his various opinions of Goldsmith. When Mrs. Thrale asked him of this matter, he spoke of it with contempt, and said that “no man should be expected to sympathise with the sorrows of “vanity.”† But he *had* sympathised with them, at least to the

\* Nay, let us remember what he has said, too, on this very subject. “Want of tenderness,” we find from Dr. Maxwell’s *Collectanea in Boswell* (iii. 136-7), “he always “alleged was want of parts, and was no less a proof of stupidity than depravity.” How delightful is Pope’s remark to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu! “I know you “have tenderness; you must have it; it is the very emanation of good-sense and “virtue; the finest minds, like the finest metals, dissolve the easiest.” *Works* (Ed. Roscoe) vi. 63. And who does not remember Juvenal?—

Mollissima corda

Humano generi dare se Natura fatetur

Quæ lachrymas dedit: hæc nostri pars optima sensus.

Sat. xv. 131-3.

† Admirable is the advice that follows: “If you are mortified by any ill usage, “whether real or enposed, keep at least the account of such mortifications to your-

extent of consoling them. Goldsmith never flung himself in vain on that great, rough, tender heart. The weakness he did his best to hide from even the kindly Langton, from the humane and generous Reynolds, was sobbed out freely there; nor is it <sup>1768.</sup> difficult to guess how JOHNSON comforted him. "Sir," he <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> said to Boswell, when that ingenious young gentleman, now a practising Scotch advocate, joined him a month or two later at Oxford, and talked slightly of the *Good-natured Man*; "it is the best comedy that has appeared since the *Provok'd Husband*. There has not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as that of Croaker. *False Delicacy* is totally devoid of character." \* Who can doubt that Goldsmith had words of reassurance at the least as kindly as these to listen to, as he walked home that night from Gerrard-street with Samuel Johnson?

Nor were other and substantial satisfactions wanting. His comedy was repeated with increased effect on the removal of the bailiffs, and its announced publication excited considerable interest. Griffin was the publisher; paid him £50 the day after its appear-

"self, and forbear to proclaim how meanly you are thought on by others, unless you desire to be meanly thought of by all." *Anecdotes*, 246.

\* *Boswell*, iii. 37-8. "Sir," continued he, "there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and *there* is the difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be understood by a more superficial observer than characters of nature, where a man must dive into the recesses of the human heart." This too, I may say, though ill applied in the special case of the novel writers, is substantially the verdict which Gibbon's friend M. Deyverdun, who with the historian edited the *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne pour l'an 1768*, delivers on the two principal comedies of the year. Remarking on the fact that the public seemed to have preferred Kelly to Goldsmith, he says that he must be bold enough to appeal from a sentence which fashion rather than taste had dictated. He speaks highly of the situations and management of the mere story in Kelly's play, but gives the palm of character and humour to Goldsmith; and though he observes (a valuable piece of evidence, by-the-by) that Goldsmith's play might in general have been better acted, and had greater justice done to it by the performers, he yet tells us that Croaker and Lofty had at least succeeded in making every one laugh heartily—*qui rient encore*—who still were in the habit of indulging in that unfashionable weakness. Let me add that Mrs. Inchbald, a woman of true genius, says of the leading characters in the comedy, "The characters of Croaker, of Honeywood, and of Lofty, each deserve this highest praise which fictitious characters can receive. In fiction they are perfectly original, yet are seen every day in real life."



ance; and, in announcing a new edition the following week, stated that the whole of the first "large impression" had been sold on the second day. But perhaps Goldsmith's greatest pleasure in connection with the printed comedy was, that he could "shame the rogues," and print the scene of the bailiffs. Nowadays it is difficult to understand the objection which condemned it, urged most strongly, as we find it, by the coarsest writers of the time. When such an attempt as Honeywood's to pass off the bailiffs for his friends, gets condemned as unworthy of a gentleman, comedy seems in sorry plight indeed. "The town will not bear Goldsmith's low humour," writes the not very decent Hoadly, the bishop's son,\* to Garrick, "and justly. It degrades his Good-natur'd Man, whom they were taught to pity and have a sort of respect for, into a low buffoon; and, what is worse, into a false, fier, a character unbecoming a gentleman."† Happily for us, Goldsmith printed the low humour notwithstanding. It had been cut out in the acting, he said, in deference to the public taste, "grown of late; perhaps, too delicate;" and was now replaced in deference to the judgment of a few friends "who think in a particular way." The particular way became more general, when his second comedy laid the ghost of sentimentalism; and one is glad to know that, though it was but the year before his death, he saw his well-beloved bailiffs restored to the scene,‡ of which they

\* John Hoadly, younger brother of the author of the *Suspicious Husband*, was a great friend of Garrick's; was one of the most clever and voluminous, but (though a dignitary and pluralist of the church, master of St. Cross, and Chancellor of Winchester) not the most decent, of his correspondents; and was himself a writer of pieces, both tragic, comic, and pastoral, none of which have kept the stage.

† Hoadly to Garrick. *Garr. Correspondence*, i. 506. Yet the age had not become too refined for Fondlewife and Ben, two of Yates's favourite characters; and Goldsmith may be forgiven the sneer with which he is said to have expressed his surprise, somewhat later, "in this refined age, to see Lord North and all his family in the stage box at the *Old Bachelor*; though to be sure, the fact of Mr. Yates having been admonished not to sing 'The Soldier and the Sailor' in that other refined comedy 'of *Love for Love*, was a gratifying proof of delicacy." This was a fact, and so enraged Yates that he swore he had sung the song for forty years, and would sing it still. *Cradock's Memoirs*, iv. 283-4.

‡ Lee Lewes, who had then just obtained a reputation by his performance of Young Marlow, played Lofty on the occasion; it being for the benefit of Mrs. Green,

have ever since been the most popular attraction. With the play, the prologue of course was printed; and here Goldsmith had another satisfaction, in the alteration of a line that had been laughed at. "Don't call me *our LITTLE bard*," he said to Johnson: <sup>1768</sup> and "*our anxious bard*" was godf<sup>r</sup> naturally substituted.\* But <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> what Boswell interposes on this head simply shows us how uneasy he was, not when Johnson's familiar diminutives, more fond than respectful, were used by himself, but when they passed into the mouths of others. "I have often desired Mr. Johnson not to call "me Goldy," was his complaint to Davies.† It was a courteous way of saying, "I wish *you* wouldn't call me Goldy, whatever "Mr. Johnson does."

The comedy was played ten consecutive nights: their majesties commanding it on the fifth night (a practice not unwise, though become unfashionable); and the third, when Reynolds enters in his note-book that he was again present, the sixth, and the ninth, being advertised as appropriated to the author. But though this seems a reasonably fair success, there is no reason to doubt Cooke's statement, that, even with the sacrifice of the bailiffs, it rather *dragged*, than supported itself buoyantly, through the remainder of the season. Shuter gave it an eleventh night, a month later, by selecting it for his benefit; when Goldsmith, in a fit of extravagant goodnature, sent him ten guineas (perhaps at the time the last he

who had the good taste to hold out the inducement in her playbills that "in act the "third, by particular desire, will be restored the original scene of the Bailiffs." *Some Account of the Stage*, v. 372.

\*

"Amidst the toils of this returning year  
When senators and nobles learn to fear,  
Our little bard, without complaint, may share," &c. &c.

Malone used to refer to this eagerly-desired omission as one of the most characteristic traits he knew of Goldsmith. *Taylor's Records*, i. 119.

† I quote Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*. "Thursday, Oct. 14, 1773. When Dr. "Johnson awaked this morning, he called 'Lanky!' having, I suppose, been think- "ing of Langton, but corrected himself instantly, and cried, 'Bozzy!' He has a "way of contracting the names of his friends. Goldsmith feels himself so im- "portant now, as to be displeased at it. I remember one day, when Tom Davies "was telling that Doctor Johnson said, 'We are all in labour for a name to Goldy's "play,' Goldsmith cried, 'I have often desired him not to call me Goldy.'" *Boswell*, v. 40.

had in the world) for a box ticket. It was again, after an interval of three years, played three nights ; \* and it was selected for Mrs.

Green's benefit the second year after that, when the bailiffs  
<sup>1788.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 40.</sup> reappeared. This is all I can discover of its career upon the London stage while the author yet lived to enjoy it.

\* *Some Account of the Stage*, v. 307. But the reader may judge with what chance of better success, when the ponderous Bensley had replaced Powell in the hero, and Lofty, now played by a Mr. Kniveton, profited no longer by the whim and eccentricity of Woolward.

## CHAPTER II.

### SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENTS, HUMBLE CLIENTS, AND SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAYS.

1768.

ON the stage, then, the success of Goldsmith's comedy of the *Good-natured Man* was far from equal to its claims of character, wit, and humour; yet its success, in other respects, very sensibly affected its author's ways of life. His three nights had produced him nearly £400; Griffin had paid him £100 more; and for any good fortune of this kind, his past fortunes had not fitted him. So little, he would himself say, was he used to receive money "in a lump," that when Newbery made him his first advance of twenty guineas, his embarrassment was as great as Captain Brazen's in the play, whether he should build a privateer or a play-house with the money.\* He now took means hardly less effective to disembarass himself of the profits of his comedy. "He descended from his attic story in the Staircase, Inner Temple," says Cooke (who here writes somewhat hastily, one descent from the "attic" having already been made), "and purchased chambers in Brick-court, Middle Temple, for which he gave four hundred pounds."† They were number two on the second floor, on the right hand ascending the staircase; and consisted of two reasonably-sized old-fashioned rooms, with a third smaller room or sleeping-closet, which he furnished handsomely, with "Wilton" carpets, "blue morine-covered" mahogany sofas, blue morine cur-

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 92.

† *Ibid.*, 171.



tains, chairs corresponding, chimney glasses, Pembroke and card tables, and tasteful book-shelves.\* Thus, and by payment for the lease of the chambers, the sum Cooke mentions would seem to have been expended; and with it began a system of waste and debt, involving him in difficulties he never surmounted. The first was in the shape of money borrowed from Mr. Edmund Bott, a barrister who occupied the rooms opposite his on the same floor, where he had in this year Reynolds and other common friends to meet him at dinner; † who remained very intimate with him for the rest of his life; and who has now this double title to be remembered, that his portrait was taken by Reynolds's pencil and his treatise on the *Poor Laws* revised by Goldsmith's pen. Exactly below the poet's were the chambers of Mr. Blackstone; and the rising lawyer, at this time finishing the fourth volume of his *Commentaries*, is reported to have made frequent complaint of the distracting social noises that went on above. A Mr. Children succeeded him, and made the same complaint.

The nature of the noises may be presumed from what is stated on the authority of a worthy Irish merchant settled in London (Mr. Seguin), to two of whose children Goldsmith stood godfather; and whose intimacy with the poet descended as an heirloom to his family, by whom every tradition of it has been carefully cherished. Members of this family recollected also other Irish friends (a Mr. Pollard, of Castle Pollard, and his wife) who visited London at this time, and were entertained by Goldsmith. ‡ They remembered dinners at which Johnson, Percy, Bickerstaff, Kelly, "and a variety of authors of minor note," were guests. They talked of supper parties with younger people, as well in the London chambers as in suburban lodgings; preceded by blind man's buff, forfeits, or games of cards; and where Goldsmith, festively entertaining them all, would make frugal supper for himself off boiled milk. They related how he would sing all kinds of Irish songs; with what

\* I quote from a "Catalogue" of his furniture, &c. in Mr. Murray's possession.

† Note-books in *Life of Reynolds* by Leslie and Taylor, i. 275.

‡ *Prior*, ii. 192-3.

special enjoyment he gave the Scotch ballad of *Johnny Armstrong* (his old nurse's favourite); how cheerfully he would put the front of his wig behind, or contribute in any other way to the general amusement; and to what accompaniment of uncon-<sup>1768.</sup>  
trollable laughter he "danced a minuet with Mrs. Seguin." <sub>Æt. 40.</sub>

Through all the distance of time may not one see even yet, moving through the steps of the minuet, that clumsy little ill-built figure, those short thick legs, those plain features,—all the clumsier and plainer for the satin-grain coat, the garter blue silk breeches, the gold sprig buttons, and the rich straw-coloured tamboured waistcoat,—yet with every sense but of honest gladness and frank enjoyment lost in the genial goodnature, the beaming mirth and truth of soul, the childlike glee and cordial fun, which turn into a cheerful little hop the austere majesty of the stateliest of all the dances? Nor let me omit from these agreeable memories a delightful anecdote which the same Mr. Ballantyne who has told us of the Wednesday-club pleasantly preserves for us in his *Mackliniana*. It introduces to us the scene of another "cheerful little hop," which, at about this time also, Macklin the actor gave at his house, when "Doctor Goldsmith, the facetious Doctor Glover, Fenton the accomplished Welsh bard, and the humane Tom King the comedian, were of the party." On this occasion so entirely happy was Goldsmith, that he danced and threw up his wig to the ceiling, and cried out that "men were never so much like men as when they looked like boys!" Little of the self-satisfied importance which Boswell is most fond of connecting with him is to be discovered in recollections like these.

And they are confirmed by Cooke's more precise account of scenes he witnessed at the Wednesday-club, where Goldsmith's more intimate associates seem now to have attempted to restrain the too great familiarity he permitted to the humbler members. An amusing instance is related. The fat man who sang songs had a friend in a certain Mr. B, described as a good sort of man and an eminent pig-butcher, who piqued himself very much on his good fellowship with the author of the *Traveller*, and whose constant

manner of drinking to him was, "Come, Noll, here's my service to  
 "you, old boy!" Repeating this one night after the comedy was  
 played, and when there was a very full club, Glover went over  
<sup>1763.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 40.</sup> to Goldsmith, and said in a whisper that he ought not to allow  
 such liberties. "Let him alone," answered Goldsmith, "and  
 "you'll see how civilly I'll let him down." He waited a little; and, on  
 the next pause in the conversation, called out aloud with a marked  
 expression of politeness and courtesy, "Mr. B, I have the honour  
 "of drinking your good health." "Thank'e, thank'e, Noll,"  
 returned Mr. B, pulling his pipe out of his mouth and answering  
 with great briskness. "Well, where's the advantage of your  
 "reproof?" asked Glover. "In truth," remarked Goldsmith,  
 with an air of good-humoured disappointment, intended to give  
 greater force to a stroke of meditated wit, "I give it up; I ought  
 "to have known before now, there is no putting a pig in the right  
 "way."\*

The same authority informs us of liberties not quite so harmless  
 as Mr. B's, and wit quite as flat as Goldsmith's, practised now  
 and then on the poet for more general amusement, by the choicer  
 spirits of the Globe.† For example, he had come into the club-  
 room one night, eager and clamorous for his supper, having been  
 out on some "shooting party" and taken nothing since the  
 morning. The wags were still round the table, at which they  
 had been enjoying themselves, when a dish of excellent mutton  
 chops, ordered as he came in, was set before the famishing poet.  
 Instantly one of the company rose, and went to another part of  
 the room. A second pushed his chair away from the table. A

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 260.

† Among such spirits we may imagine the experience picked up to which Mrs.  
 Thrale has referred in one of her letters. "I was like some famous boxer that was  
 "knocked down by a farthing candle artfully slung at his head, while yet bleeding  
 "and bruised to death almost from a victory newly won. Dr. Goldsmith, whose  
 "feet 'every path of vulgarity trod,' told us once of an ale-house wager. A man  
 "betted that he would produce a person who should perform this operation on some  
 "well-known hero of the fist; who, not being apprised of the frolic and panting for  
 "breath and refreshment, felt this sudden hit upon his temporal artery, and dropped  
 "down demolished by a farthing candle." Hayward's *Literary Remains of Mrs.*  
*Piozzi*, ii. 149.

third showed more decisive signs of distress, connecting it with the chops in a manner not to be mistaken. "How the waiter could have dared to produce such a dish!" was at last the reluctant remark to Goldsmith's alarmed inquiries. "Why, the chops <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> were offensive; the fellow ought to be made to eat them "himself." Anxious for supper as he was, the plate was at once thrust from him; the waiter violently summoned into the room; and an angry order given that he should try to make his own repast of what he had so impudently set before a hungry man. The waiter, now conscious of a trick, complied with affected reluctance; and Goldsmith, more quickly appeased than enraged, as his wont was, ordered a fresh supper for himself, "and a dram "for the poor devil of a waiter, who might otherwise get sick from "so nauseating a meal." \*

Another incident belonging to this year or the following shows him in still stranger scenes and more doubtful company. There was a wild eccentric creature named Parker, who had been sailor, soldier, exciseman, and strolling player, was now eager to get upon the London stage, and through Shuter had made interest with Goldsmith to intercede for him with Colman. Unsuccessful in this, he set up as wandering lecturer on elocution, and ended by writing memoirs and adventures, in one of which (*Life's Painter*), describing London night-houses and a particular drink called "Hot," he related how strangely he had partaken of it in company with Shuter and Goldsmith. The three had passed the evening at the actor's house, and he and Shuter were seeing Goldsmith, "that darling of his age," to his chambers in the Temple, "when Shuter prevailed on the Doctor to step into one of these houses "just to see a little fun, as he called it." The fun, however, proved to be of somewhat too strong a flavour, and the language employed by one of Shuter's acquaintance revealed suddenly to Goldsmith, with a great shock, the society he had been brought into. "Good God!" he exclaimed, rising from his seat and rushing out of the "box" in what Parker calls a great perturba-

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 200.



tion of mind, "and have I been sitting in company all this while  
"with a hangman!"\*

Before I pass from these strange and eccentric pages in the  
1768.  
Æt. 40. life of my hero, it will be proper to mention Kelly's withdrawal  
from the Wednesday-club. Alleged attacks by Goldsmith on  
his comedy having been repeated to him with exaggeration,—such  
as a remark, on being told of the contemplated foreign translations,  
that except for the booths of foreign fairs they were little likely  
to be required; and an impetuous refusal to write again for the  
stage, while such trash as *False Delicacy* continued to attract  
audiences,—Kelly resolved to resent the unfriendliness. What  
the exact character of their friendship had been, I cannot precisely  
ascertain; but though recent, it had probably for a time been  
intimate. Kelly succeeded Jones as editor of the *Public Ledger*,  
and the common connection with Newbery must have brought  
them much together; we find Kelly, as the world and its prospects  
became brighter with him, moving into chambers in the Temple,  
near Goldsmith's; nor is it difficult to believe the report of which  
I have found several traces, that but for his sensible remonstrance  
on the prudential score, his wife's sister, who lived in his house,  
and was pretty and poor as his wife, being simply, as she had been,  
an expert and industrious needlewoman; would have been carried  
off and wedded by Goldsmith.† Since their respective comedies

\* The extract from Parker's book, and some account of the author, will be found  
in *Notes and Queries*, 2nd S. iv. 168.

† Cooke, after mentioning Kelly's marriage, and what an excellent manager the  
needlewoman proved, goes on to say expressly: "Doctor Goldsmith, who visited  
"Kelly some years after, confessed this, and was so struck with the comforts and  
"conveniences of matrimony, that he proposed for the other sister; but Kelly resisted.  
"this upon very honourable grounds. He knew his sister-in-law to be the very  
"reverse of his wife in temper and economy; he likewise knew Goldsmith to be very  
"thoughtless in respect to worldly affairs, and not very industrious; he therefore  
"remonstrated with him on the great impropriety of such a match, till with some  
"difficulty and address, he weaned him from the pursuit." *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 339.  
The same writer seems to me to put very sensibly the art or tact by which a writer  
so inferior to Goldsmith as Kelly had for the moment raised himself to the same  
level of stage success: "Goldsmith had the superiority of genius and education, but  
"would not bend either beneath the level of his own understanding; whilst Kelly,  
"who understood little more than the surface of things, better accommodated his  
"knowledge to all the vicissitudes of public opinion."

they had not met; when, abruptly encountering each other one night in the Covent-garden green-room, Goldsmith stammered out awkward congratulations to Kelly on his recent success, to which the other, prepared for war, promptly replied that he could not thank him because he could not believe him. "From that

1768.

Æt. 40.

"hour they never spoke to one another:"\* and Kelly, reluctant, that Goldsmith should be troubled to "do anything more for him," resigned the club. The latter allusion was (by way of satire) to a story he used to tell of the terms of Goldsmith's answer to a dinner invitation which he had given him. "I would with pleasure accept your kind invitation," so ran the whimsical and very pardonable speech, "but to tell you the truth, my dear boy, my *Traveller* has found me a home in so many places, that I am engaged, I believe, three days. Let me see. To-day I dine with Edmund Burke, to-morrow with Doctor Nugent,† and the next day with Topham Beauclerc; but I'll tell you what *I'll do for you*, I'll dine with you on Saturday."‡ Now Kelly, though conceited and not very scrupulous, was not an ill-natured man, on the whole; he wrote a novel called *Louisa Mildmay*, which, with some scenes of a questionable kind of warmth, an ill-natured man could not have written; but he was not justified in the tone he took during this quarrel, and after it. It was not for him to sneer

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 170.

† Again with Burke, that would be; for he and his father-in-law lived together at this time. The name was probably mistaken for that of Chamier, or some other of Goldsmith's club friends.

‡ *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 171. Incidental evidence is certainly afforded by Reynolds's note-books of this year, not only of the increase of Goldsmith's dinings out, but of the also unhappily increasing frequency of his dinners at home. Reynolds went for a few weeks' trip to Paris in the autumn, returning on Sunday, the 23rd of October, and on "Monday 24th, dined with Dr. Goldsmith," is the first entry after his return. "This dinner," Mr. Taylor adds, "is followed next day by another; and during the remainder of the year there are frequent engagements with the Doctor, now living in his new rooms at Brick-court. . . One of these engagements for Wednesday the 23rd of November, must have been just after Reynolds had been made president of the New Academy. . . There is one 6th of October engagement, too, to Mr. Bott, Goldsmith's opposite neighbour in Brick-court; and traces of a visit, doubtless with Goldsmith, to the Shilling-Rubber Club held at the Devil Tavern." *Life*, i. 290.

at Goldsmith's follies, who was for nothing more celebrated than for his own unconscious imitations of them; who was so fond, in his

little gleam of prosperity, of displaying on his sideboard the  
<sup>1768.</sup>  
~~Mr.~~ 40. plate he possessed, that he added to it his silver spurs;\*  
 and who, even as he laughed at his more famous country-  
 man's Tyrian bloom and satin, was displaying his own corpulent  
 little person at all public places in "a flaming broad silver-laced  
 "waistcoat, bag-wig, and sword."†

Mr. William Filby's bill marks the 21st of January as the day when the "Tyrian bloom satin grain, and garter blue silk breeches" (charged £8 2s. 7d.) were sent home; and doubtless this was the suit ordered for the comedy's first night. Within three months, Mr. Filby having meanwhile been paid his previous year's account by a draft on Griffin,‡ another more expensive suit ("lined with

\* Johnson mentioned this characteristic fact to Mr. John Nichols. *Boswell*, viii. 411.

† I quote from a notice of Kelly, also written by Cooke in the *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 421.

‡ I subjoin the entries for 1767 and 1768 from Mr. William Filby's Ledger (whom Newbery mis-called Pilby, I find by reference to his original MSS, while Boswell mis-named him John), as given in *Prior*, ii. 231-2.

"Mr. Oliver Goldsmith, Dr.

Brick Court, Temple, No. 2, up two pair of stairs.

1767.		Brought from fol. 26		
March	4.	To superfine suit complete	.	£25 19 2½
June	19.	To suit complete	.	6 0 9
Sept.	8.	To superfine cloth breeches	.	6 1 6
Oct.	2.	To suit of state mourning	.	1 2 0
			.	6 8 9
Dec.	26.	To black thickset breeches	.	1 1 0
	28.	To superfine frock suit	.	5 12 0

£52 5 2½

(Paid by a draft on Griffin, Feb. 6, 1768.)

1768.			
Jan.	21.	To Tyrian bloom satin grain and garter blue silk breeches	£8 2 7
March	17.	To suit of clothes — colour, lined with silk, and gold buttons	9 7 0
June	16.	To suit of mourning	5 12 6
July	22.	To 2 yards of green livery cloth	1 2 0
Aug.	29.	To suit cleaned	0 6 0

Carried forward . £24 10 1



"silk, and gold buttons") was supplied; and in three months more, the entry on the same account of "a suit of mourning," furnished on the 16th of June, marks the period of his brother Henry's death. At the close of the previous month, in the village of <sup>1763.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> Athlone, had terminated, at the age of forty-five, that life of active piety and humble but noble usefulness, whose unpretending Christian example, far above the worldlier fame he had himself acquired, his younger brother's genius has consecrated for ever. Shortly after he had tidings of his loss, the character of the Village Preacher was most probably written; for certainly the lines which immediately precede it were composed about a month before. From his father and his brother alike, indeed, were drawn the exquisite features of this sketch; but of the so recent grief we may find marked and unquestionable trace, as well in the sublime and solemn image at the close, as in those opening allusions to Henry's unworldly contentedness, which already he had celebrated, in prose hardly less beautiful, by that dedication to the *Traveller* which he put forth and paraded with as great a sense of pride derived from it as though it proclaimed the patronage of a prince or noble. Now too is repeated, with yet greater earnestness, his former tribute to his brother's hospitality.

			Brought forward	. £24	10	1
Sept.	24.	To coat and waistcoat cleaned and made up	.	0	14	0
	30.	To fine worsted breeches	.	1	2	0
Nov.	29.	To suit of grain mixture	.	5	14	6
		To man	.	0	1	0
				<hr/>		
				£32	1	7
				<hr/>		

(Paid Oct. 9, 1769, by a note on Mr. Griffin, three months after date, for £33.)"

And now, as I am again on this subject of dress which so sadly plagues poor Goldsmith's memory, let me take the opportunity of remarking that sobriety of costume really was the exception rather than the rule of the period. I shall have something to record shortly of the wardrobe of the Macaronis, and meanwhile Horne Tooke's biographer may give us, from the year now present, a glimpse of the "fashionable" clothes in which the Vicar of New Brentford was wont to disport himself during intervals of holiday from his ministerial duties, and a relay of which he kept privately at Paris for that purpose. Among them we find suits of scarlet and gold, of white and silver, of blue and silver, of flowered silk, of black silk, and of black velvet. See Stephens's *Life of Horne Tooke* (letter dated 25th May, 1767), i. 83.



1768.

Æt. 40.

A man he was to all the country dear;  
 And passing rich with forty pounds a year.  
 Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
 Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change, his place;  
 Unpractis'd he to fawn, or seek for power  
 By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour,  
 Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize—  
 More skill'd to raise the wretched than to rise.  
 His house was known to all the vagrant train;  
 He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain:  
 The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,  
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;  
 The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,  
 Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;  
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
 Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away—  
 Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,  
 Shoulder'd his crutch and show'd how fields were won.  
 Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,  
 And quite forgot their vices in their woe;  
 Careless their merits or their faults to scan,  
 His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,  
 And even his failings lean'd to virtue's side:  
 But in his duty, prompt at every call,  
 He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all;  
 And, as a bird each fond endearment tries  
 To tempt its new-fledg'd offspring to the skies,  
 He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,  
 Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,  
 And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismay'd,  
 The reverend champion stood: at his control,  
 Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;  
 Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,  
 And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
 His looks adorn'd the venerable place;  
 Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,  
 And fools who came to scoff remain'd to pray.\*  
 The service pass'd, around the pious man,  
 With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;

\* Here one may perhaps perceive another of the many evidences which Goldsmith's writings afford of his familiarity with turns and expressions in the poetry of Dryden:

Our vows are heard betimes, and heaven takes care  
 To grant, before we can conclude the pray'r;  
 Preventing angels met it half the way,  
 And sent us back to praise who came to pray.

*Britannia Rediviva*, in Scott's *Dryden*, x. 239.

Even children follow'd, with endearing smile,  
 And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile :  
 His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,  
 Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distress'd.  
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,  
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven :  
 As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,  
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,  
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.\*

1763.

Æt. 40.

The idea of the *Deserted Village* was thrown out at the close of the *Traveller*,

(Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,  
 The smiling, long-frequented village fall ?  
 Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,  
 The modest matron, and the blushing maid,  
 Forc'd from their homes. . .)

and on the general glad acceptance of that poem he had at once turned his thoughts to its successor. The subject of the growth of trade and opulence in England, of the relation of labour to the production of wealth, and of the advantage or disadvantage of its position in reference to manufactures and commerce, or as connected

\* Gilbert Wakefield (in his *Memoirs*) calls this "perhaps the sublimest simile that English poetry can boast," and produces a passage from Claudian strongly resembling it, which however is not very likely to have fallen in Goldsmith's way. To my friend Lord Lytton I owe the knowledge of another and very curious resemblance between it and some lines in a poem on the ills and inconveniences of old age, written by the Abbé de Chaulieu, whom Voltaire so much admired, and who felt the ills he celebrates so little, that when he had passed his eightieth year he was the declared lover of Mademoiselle de Launay.

"Au milieu cependant de ces peines cruelles  
 De notre triste hiver, compagnes trop fidèles,  
 Je suis tranquille et gai. Quel bien plus précieux  
 Puis-je espérer jamais de la bonté des dieux !  
 Tel qu'un rocher dont la tête,  
 Egalant le Mont Athos,  
 Voit à ses pieds la tempête  
 Troubler le calme des flots,  
 La mer autour bruit et gronde ;  
 Malgré ses émotions,  
 Sur son front élevé règne une paix profonde,  
 Que tant d'agitations  
 Et que ses fureurs de l'onde  
 Respectent à l'égal du nid des alcyons."

with the cultivation of land, which, two years after the *Traveller* appeared, Adam Smith exalted into a philosophic system by the publication of his immortal *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, was one that Goldsmith had frequently adverted to in his earliest writings, and on which his views were undoubtedly less sound than poetical. It may be worth remark indeed, that, a favourite subject of reflection as this theme always was with him, and often as he adverts to such topics connected with it as the effects of luxury and wealth on the simpler habits of a people, it is difficult to believe that he had ever arrived at a settled conclusion in his own mind, one way or the other. What he pleads for in his poetry, his prose for the most part condemns. Thus the argument of the *Deserted Village* is distinctly at issue with the philosophy of the *Citizen of the World*,\* in which he reasons that to the accumulation of wealth may be assigned not only the greatest part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues; and exhibits poets, philosophers, and even patriots, marching in luxury's train. On the other hand, he occasionally again breaks out † into complaints as indignant as they are shallow and ill founded, that "the rich should cry out for liberty while they "thus starve their fellow-creatures" (he is alluding to the obligation on the poor to sell and give up what they possess at the call of the rich, as if it were a hardship that they should not be paid for themselves enjoying what they are paid for surrendering to others), "and feed them up with an imaginary good while they monopolize "the real benefits of nature." The real truth is that Goldsmith had no settled opinions on the subject, which nevertheless was one of unceasing interest to him, and to which he brought a mind at least so far free from prejudice, one way or the other, that at this moment it was open to reason and at the next to sentiment merely.‡ Doubtless, however, the latter was most strongly felt

\* Letter xi.

† As in the *Animated Nature*, ii. 223.

‡ Yet Johnson himself on these matters betrayed often hardly less inconsistency. I call to mind one of the most subtle and curious remarks made by him in almost the whole of *Boswell*, which closes, notwithstanding, with a singular contradiction.

and oftener indulged. For his merely sentimental views had grown out of early impressions, were passionately responded to by the warmer sensibilities of his nature, and had received supposed corroboration from his own experience. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that for four or five years before the *Deserted Village* was published, he had, by sundry country excursions into various parts of England, verified his fears of the tendency of overgrowing wealth to depopulate the land;\* and his remark to a friend who called upon him the second morning after he commenced the poem was nearly to the same effect. "Some of my friends differ  
"with me on this plan," he said after describing the scheme,  
"and think this depopulation of villages does not exist; but I am  
"myself satisfied of the fact. I remember it in my own country,  
"and have seen it in this."†

The friend who so called upon him, in May 1768; who marks the date as exactly two years before the poem appeared; and who tells us that the writing of it, and its elaborate revision, extended over that whole interval of twenty-four months; was supposed by Scott to have been Lee Lewes the actor. It is difficult to understand how this mistake originated; but it would seem that Sir Walter had judged from only a small portion of the

"Depend upon it," he said to Boswell in the Hebrides (iv. 252), "this rage of trade  
"will destroy itself. You and I shall not see it; but the time will come when there  
"will be an end of it. Trade is like gaming. If a whole company are gamblers,  
"play must cease; for there is nothing to be won. When all nations are traders,  
"there is nothing to be gained by trade, and it will stop first where it is brought to  
"the greatest perfection. Then the proprietors of land only will be the great men."  
As if, while all classes were becoming merged in the universal equality of trade, any particular class could yet continue to hold itself aloof and apart, entirely self-dependent and sustaining! It is only fair to add, of those passages of doubtful wisdom in the *Animated Nature* to which I refer in my text, that, while they exhibit the poet's political economy at its very worst, they also display the warmth of his desire to benefit the poor, and show by what vivid recollections of the travel of his youth, and of the contrast then observed between the peasantry of his own and other countries, he was betrayed into his hasty conclusions. See among others li. 223-4.

\* "I sincerely believe," he adds, "what I have written; I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions for these four or five years past, to be  
"certain of what I allege; and all my views and inquiries have led me to believe  
"those miseries real, which I here attempt to display."

† *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 172.



papers whose authorship he thus misstated, and which, except in apparently imperfect and garbled extracts, have equally escaped all

Goldsmith's biographers and never been properly made use of until now. The poet's acquaintance with the comedian had <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> not yet begun, nor in the acknowledged (and extremely dull)

*Memoirs of Lee Lewes* does Goldsmith's name at any time occur. The real writer of the anecdotes was Cooke, the young law student already so often referred to as Goldsmith's countryman and near neighbour in the Temple; and their curious details, till now, have been almost wholly overlooked. They appeared from time to time, as I have before stated, in the *European Magazine*.

Cooke prefaces the mention of his calling on "the Doctor" the second morning after the *Deserted Village* was begun, by an account of the Doctor's slowness in writing poetry, "not from the tardiness of fancy, but the time he took in pointing the sentiment, and polishing the versification." An invaluable hint to the poetical aspirant, as already I have strongly urged. Indisputable wealth of genius, flung about in careless exuberance, has as often failed to make a poet, as one finished unsuperfluous masterpiece has succeeded, and kept a name in the Collections for ever. Goldsmith's manner of writing the *Deserted Village*, his friend tells us, was this: he first sketched a part of his design in prose, in which he threw out his ideas as they occurred to him; he then sat down carefully to versify them, correct them, and add such other ideas as he thought better fitted to the subject; and if sometimes he would exceed his prose design by writing several verses impromptu, these he would take singular pains afterwards to revise, lest they should be found unconnected with his main design. Ten lines, from the fifth to the fifteenth, had been his second morning's work; and when Cooke entered his chamber, he read them to him aloud.

Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please—  
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,  
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene  
How often have I paus'd on every charm—  
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,

The never-failing brook, the busy mill,  
The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill,  
The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade  
For talking age and whispering lovers made.

1762.

Æt. 40.

"Come," he added, "let me tell you this is no bad morning's work; and now, my dear boy, if you are not better engaged, I should be glad to enjoy a Shoemaker's Holiday with you."

This proposed enjoyment is then described by Cooke, in a simple, characteristic way. "A Shoemaker's Holiday was a day of great festivity to poor Goldsmith, and was spent in the following innocent manner. Three or four of his intimate friends rendezvoused at his chambers to breakfast about ten o'clock



"in the morning; at eleven they proceeded by the City-road and through the fields to Highbury-barn to dinner;\* about six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to White-conduit House to drink tea; and concluded by supping at the Grecian or Temple-exchange coffee-house, or at the Globe in Fleet-street. There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and pastry, kept at Highbury-barn about this time at tenpence per head, including

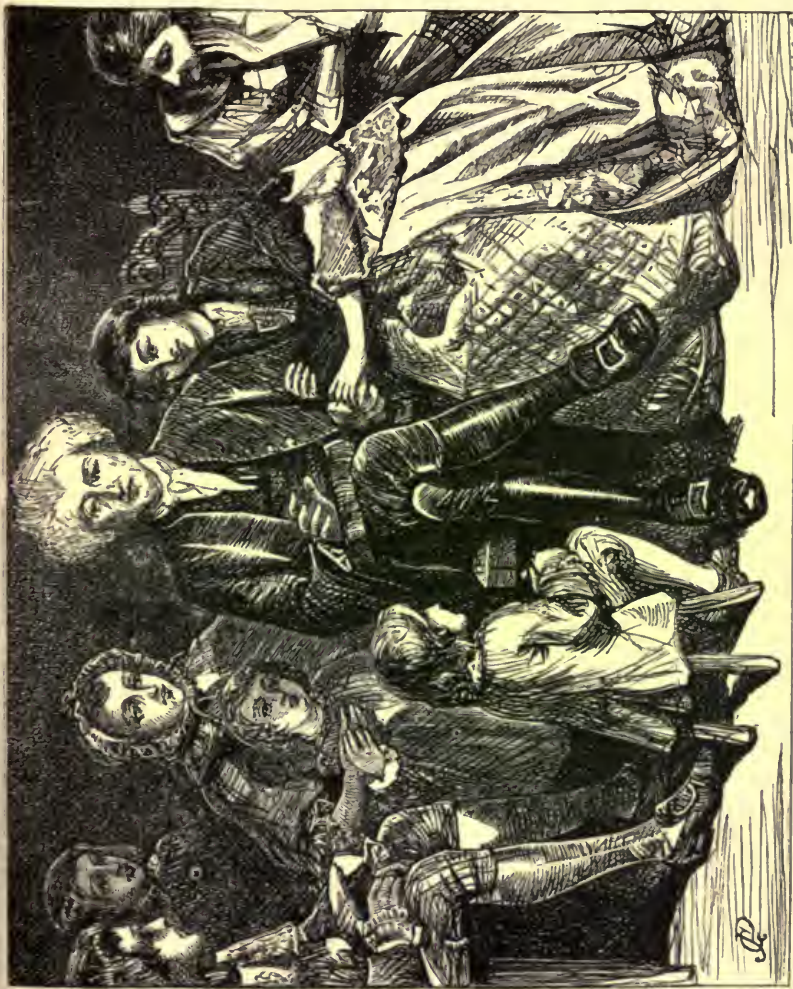
\* The ordinary was at one; a primitive hour; but not very many years had passed since Cibber's Sir Charles Easy, the type of a man of fashion, dined habitually at two o'clock. The dinner-hour of The Club, when, in the year after Goldsmith's death, supper gave way to that more important repast, was half-past four.

"a penny to the waiter; and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade. The whole expenses of the day's fête never exceeded a crown, and oftener were from three-and-six-pence to four shillings; for which the party obtained good air and exercise, good living, the example of simple manners, and good conversation."\*

Truly, very innocent enjoyment; and shared not alone by Templars and small wits, but by humbler good fellows. One Peter Barlow, who acted now and then as a copyist for Goldsmith, —very poor, very proud in his way; who appeared always in one peculiar dress; who declared himself able to give only a specified small sum for his daily dinner, but who stood firmly on his ability to do this, and never permitted any one to do it for him,—had made himself a great favourite with the poet by his honest independence and harmless eccentricity, and had generally a place in the Shoemaker's Holiday. If the dinner cost even five shillings each, fifteenpence was still the limit of Peter's responsibility; and the balance was privately paid by Goldsmith. Many, too, were his other pensioners, on less liberal terms than Peter. He had two or three poor authors always on his list, besides "several widows

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 172. Skittles, it would seem, was a game in some vogue with the party; but remembering what Horace Walpole tells us of the Chatsworth of his day, that the old Duchess "staid every evening till it was dusk in the "skittle-ground, keeping the score," we need not be greatly shocked at the "low" tastes of our hero. Besides these convivial social sports, one might almost infer, too, that he occasionally varied them with the "cheerful solitude" of a day's angling, such is the personal zest observable in the passage of the *Animated Nature* (v. 157) wherein the latter is referred to. "Happy England!" Goldsmith breaks out. "Where the sea furnishes an abundant and luxurious repast, and the fresh waters an innocent and harmless pastime; where the angler, in cheerful solitude, strolls by the edge of the stream, and fears neither the coiled snake nor the lurking crocodile; where he can retire at night, with his few trouts, to borrow the pretty description of old Walton, to some friendly cottage, where the landlady is good, and the daughter innocent and beautiful; where the room is cleanly, with lavender on the sheets, and twenty ballads stuck about the wall! There he can enjoy the company of a talkative brother sportsman, have his trouts dressed for supper, tell tales, sing old tunes, or make a catch! There he can talk of the wonders of Nature with learned admiration, or find some harmless sport to content him, and pass away a little time without offence to God or injury to man."





THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD AND HIS FAMILY.





"and poor housekeepers;" and when he had no money to give the latter, he seldom failed to send them away with shirts or old clothes, sometimes with the whole contents of his breakfast table: saying with a smile of satisfaction after they were gone, "Now let me only suppose I have eat a much heartier breakfast than usual, and I'm nothing out of pocket." Those who knew him best, exclaims Cooke, after relating some stories of this kind, can best speak in his praise. "He was so humane in his disposition, that his last guinea was the general boundary of his munificence."\*

Yet Cooke was no enthusiast. He had rather, at the time these anecdotes were written, fallen into the Boswell way of talking of his old patron; and was careful to colour his picture, as though to adapt it for popular acceptance, with all due tints of vanity and folly. Unable to conceal, indeed, the pains he is at in doing this, his examples are often very amusing failures. One day, for instance, he tells us, Goldsmith being in company where many ladies were, and a ballad-singer happening to sing his favourite air of *Sally Salisbury* under the window, his envy and vanity broke out, and he exclaimed with some passion, "How miserably this woman sings!" "Pray, Doctor," rejoined the lady of the house, "could you do it better?" "Yes, madam," was the answer, amidst a general titter of distrust; "and the company shall be judges." He instantly began; when, adds Cooke, with a sort of naïve renewal of the wonder of the ladies, "singing with some ear and no inconsiderable degree of pathos, he obtained the universal suffrages of the company."\* I have spoken of the harmless forms of miscalled vanity and envy which unconscious comparative criticism will sometimes breed, and surely this is but pleasant evidence of them. Nor did the narrator prove more successful when he professed to give instances of Goldsmith's folly. The poet of the *Pleasures of Memory*, interested in all that concerned the elder poet whose style he made the model for his own finished writings, knew Cooke well in the latter days of his

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 261.

life,\* and gives me curious illustration of the habit he then had fallen into when he spoke of his celebrated friend. "Sir," he said, on Mr. Rogers asking what Goldsmith really was in <sup>1768.</sup> conversation, "he was a fool. The right word never came <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> to him. If you gave him back a bad shilling, he'd say, "'Why it's as good a shilling as ever was *born*.' You know he ought to have said *coined*. *Coined*, sir, never entered his head. "He was a fool, sir."

It may be added, since the question of vanity and envy has again arisen here, that even Tom Davies, who talks more of his envious sallies than any one, tells us they were altogether childish, harmless, and absurd; that nothing but mirth was ever suggested by them; and that he never formed any scheme, or joined in any combination, to hurt any man living.† A more important witness, too, gives yet more interesting testimony. Bishop Percy, who of all his distinguished friends had known him earliest, after stating that he was generous in the extreme; that never was there a mind whose general feelings were more benevolent and friendly; and that, so strongly was he affected by compassion, he had been known at midnight to abandon his rest, in order to procure relief and an asylum for a poor dying object who was left destitute in the streets; proceeds thus: "He is however supposed to have "been often soured by jealousy or envy; and many little instances

\* Cooke survived till 1824, fully justifying what he always asserted, that he came of a long-lived family; his father having been actually a class-fellow with the youngest son of Dryden, and well remembering the funeral of the great poet.

† *Life of Garrick*, ii. 168. It was at this time, according to Tom, that "his absurdities were so glaring, his whole conduct so contradictory to common sense, "and so opposite to what was expected from a man of his admirable genius, that a "gentleman of strong discernment (Mr. Horace Walpole) characterised him by the "name of the Inspired Idiot." ii. 152. Nevertheless, Tom is good enough to admit: "As I have with great freedom exposed his faults, I should not have dwelt so "minutely upon them, if I had not been conscious that upon a just balance of his "good and bad qualities, the former would far outweigh the latter. Goldsmith was "so sincere a man, that he could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind: and "no man was ever very mischievous whose errors excited mirth." ii. 167-8. I may add that Walpole's expression of "inspired idiot," being repeated in Forbes's *Life of Beattie*, elicits from Mrs. Piozzi, among the MS. notes of her old age on the margin of the copy before named (*ante*, p. 81), an emphatic "very true."

“are mentioned of this tendency in his character: but whatever appeared of this kind was a mere momentary sensation, which he knew not how like other men to conceal. It was never the result of principle, or the suggestion of reflection; it <sup>1768.</sup> never embittered his heart, nor influenced his conduct.”\* <sup>Æt. 40.</sup>

Let this emphatic language be the comment on any future record of such “little instances;” and when Johnson ridicules, hereafter, his friend’s ignorance of things, let it be taken with Cooke’s odd illustration of his supposed ignorance of words.

\* *Percy Memoir*, 117. Beyond a doubt this was written by the bishop himself. But, as if it were impossible to let even such an avowal stand uncoupled with something of depreciation, the writer adds: “Nothing could be more amiable than the general features of his mind; those of his person were not, perhaps, so engaging.”



### CHAPTER III.

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#### THE EDGEWARE COTTAGE, ST. STEPHEN'S, AND GRUB-STREET.

1768.

HENRY GOLDSMITH'S death would seem to have been made known to his brother Oliver shortly before we discover the latter to have gone for a summer retreat into a cottage eight miles down <sup>1768.</sup> the Edgware-road, "at the back of Canons." He had <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> taken it in connection with his neighbour in the Temple, Mr. Bott; and they kept it for some little time. It was very small, and very absurdly decorated; and, as a set-off to his Shoemaker's Holiday, he used to call this his Shoemaker's Paradise, one of that craft having built it, and laid it out with flying Mercuries, *jets d'eau*, and other preposterous ornaments,\* though the ground it stood upon, with its two rooms on a floor, its garden and all, covered considerably less than half an acre. The friends would occasionally drive down to this retreat, even after dining in London, goodnatured Mr. Bott being also one of those respectable men who kept a horse and gig: and a curious letter is said to be in existence written by Goldsmith shortly before his death, thanking him again and again for timely pecuniary help, rendered in his worst straits; saying it is to Bott he entirely owes that he can sit down in safety in his chambers without the terrors of arrest hanging momentarily over him; and recalling such whimsical scenes of past days as when they used to drive down the Edgware-road at night, and, both their necks being brought to immi-

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 94.

ment peril by the gig's descent into a ditch, the driver (Bott) would exhaust all his professional eloquence to prove that at that instant they were exactly in the centre of the road.\*

Here the *History of Rome*, undertaken for Davies, was at <sup>1768.</sup> leisure proceeded with; here the new poem, worked at in <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> the adjoining lanes, and in pleasant strolls along the shady hedges, began to grow in importance; here, thus tuning his exquisite song outside the bars of his London prison, he might with himself enjoy that sense of liberty for which it so delighted him to listen to the songs of other uncaged birds; † and here, so engaged, Goldsmith seems to have passed the greater part of the summer, apparently not much moved by what was going on elsewhere. Walpole, mourning for the loss of his Lady Hervey and his Lady Suffolk, was reading his tragedy of the *Mysterious Mother* to his lady-friends who remained, and rejoicing that he did not need to

\* See *Percy Memoir*, 112, note.

† See *ante*, i. 340. I will here add, as a supplement to the exquisite passage there quoted from the *Animated Nature*, another, hardly less pleasing (iv. 260), on the Robin Redbreast. Goldsmith is talking of the sagacity of the nightingale, which however he seems to doubt; and continues: "It is but to have high reputation for any one quality, and the world is ready enough to give us fame for others to which we have very small pretensions. But there is a little bird rather celebrated for its affection to mankind than its singing, which however, in our climate, has the sweetest note of all others. The reader already perceives that I mean the Redbreast, the well-known friend of man, that is found in every hedge, and makes it vocal. The note of other birds is louder, and their inflections more capricious; but this bird's voice is soft, tender, and well-supported; and the more to be valued as we enjoy it the greatest part of the winter. If the nightingale's song has been compared to the fiddle, the red-breast's voice has all the delicacy of the flute." I take the opportunity of adding, as well for the mere pleasure of transcribing the lines as that the reader should see them here, that stanza on the red-breast which Gray expunged from the *Elegy*, and which made Lord Byron wonder that he could have had the heart to do it.

Here scattered oft, the earliest of the year,  
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found,  
The red-breast loves to build and warble here,  
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

Two most charming lines I am tempted to add to these, because neither are *they* to be found in the ordinary editions of Gray's poems. They were made by Mr. Gray, says Nicholls (*Works*, v. 34), as we were walking in the spring in the neighbourhood of Cambridge.

There pipes the wood-lark, and the song-thrush there  
Scatters his loose notes in the waste of air.

expose himself to "the impertinencies of that jackanapes Garrick, " who lets nothing appear but his own wretched stuff, or that of

"creatures still duller, who suffer him to alter their pieces  
 1768.  
 as he pleases;"\*—but Goldsmith's withers are unwrung.  
 Act. 40.

Hume was receiving a considerable increase to his pension, with significant intimation of the royal wish that he should apply himself to the continuation of his *English History*; while great lords were fondly dandling Robertson into the good graces of the booksellers, the Chief Justice was admiringly telling the Duke of Bedford that 4500*l.* was to be paid him for his *History of Charles the Fifth*, and Walpole was reasonably sneering at what Scotch puffing and partiality might do;†—but the humbler historian at Edgeware pursues his labours unbribed and undisturbed. The *Sentimental Journey* was giving pleasure to not a few; even Walpole was declaring it "infinitely preferable to the tiresome *Tristram Shandy*;" while, within a few months, at a grand dinner-table round which were seated two dukes, two earls, Mr. Garrick, and Mr. Hume, a footman in attendance was announcing Sterne's lonely death in a common lodging-house in Bond-street;‡—but Goldsmith does not yet see the shadow of his own early decay. Gray, who had in

\* *Coll. Lett.* v. 199. His audience consisted of Lady Aylesbury, Lady Lyttelton, and Miss Rich; his friend Conway assisting on the occasion.

† *Coll. Lett.* v. 223.

‡ I quote from a curious volume based on facts undoubtedly authentic: "In the month of January, 1768, we set off for London. We stopped for some time at Almack's house, in Pall-mall. My master afterwards took Sir James Gray's house in Clifford-street, who was going ambassador to Spain. He now began house-keeping, hired a French cook, house-maid, and kitchen-maid, and kept a great deal of the best company. About this time, Mr. Sterne, the celebrated author, was taken ill at the silk-bag shop in Old Bond-street. He was sometimes called Tristram Shandy, and sometimes Yorick, a very great favourite of the gentlemen's. One day my master had company to dinner, who were speaking about him: the Duke of Roxburgh, the Earl of March, the Earl of Ossory, the Duke of Grafton, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Hume, and Mr. James. 'John,' said my master, 'go and inquire how Mr. Sterne is to-day.' I went, returned, and said, 'I went to Mr. Sterne's lodging—the mistress opened the door—I enquired how he did. She told me to go up to the nurse; I went into the room, and he was just a-dying. I waited ten minutes; but in five, he said, "Now it is come!" He put up his hand, as if to stop a blow, and died in a minute.' The gentlemen were all very sorry, and lamented him very much." *The Life of a Footman; or the Travels of James*

vain solicited the Cambridge professorship of modern history\* while he yet had the health it would have given him spirit to enjoy, and was now about to receive it from the Duke of Grafton when no longer able to hold it,† was wondering at <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> a new book about Corsica in which he found a hero portrayed by a green goose, and where he had the comfort of feeling that what was wise in it must be true, for the writer was too great a fool to invent it;‡—but Goldsmith has never been much

*Macdonald*, Svo. 1790. (1852.) I may now refer to Mr. Fitzgerald's very lively, interesting, and carefully written *Life of Sterne*, for the sad and shocking incident that closed this terrible tragedy. 1870.

\* From Lord Bute. See Walpole's *Coll. Lett.* v. 342. "As this," says Mason, "was the only application Mr. Gray ever made to the ministry, I thought it necessary "to insert his own account of it." His own account of it is in a letter to Dr. Wharton (*Works*, iii. 301). After describing his application, to which he says he was "cockered and spirited up by some friends," he continues: "I received my "answer very soon, which was what you may easily imagine, but joined with great "professions of his *desire to serve me* on any future occasion, and many more fine "words that I pass over, not out of modesty, but for another reason. So you see I "have made my fortune, like Sir Fr. Wronghead." The tutor of Sir James Lowther, a great ministerial man, got the place. For the affecting expressions of gratitude with which Gray received at last the tardy gift which he enjoyed for so short a time, see *Works*, iv. 120-125. I ought perhaps to add that five years before his unsuccessful application to Lord Bute, the Duke of Devonshire (then Lord Chamberlain) offered him the office of Poet Laureate, at that time in very low esteem, which he respectfully had declined. *Works*, iii. 186. And see *Correspondence with Mason*, 112-14.

† Poor Gray! even his quiet scholarly life could not protect him from the scurrility of the time, from which Goldsmith so sorely suffered. "My friend Mr. "Gray," says Walpole's friend Cole, "a man devoid of all ambitious views, because "his friend Mr. Stonehewer had pointed him out as a most proper person to the Duke "of Grafton for the professorship of modern history, without the least application or "thought of it himself, met with the most illiberal abuse in the public papers," &c. &c. *Cole's MSS.* xxxii. 12. *Cavendish Debates*, i. 621. And see Woolf's *Warton*, 335-6.

‡ "When Boswell published his account of Corsica, I found Mr. Gray reading "it. 'With this,' he said, 'I am much pleased, because I see that the author is "too foolish to have invented it.'" Nicholls's *Reminiscences of Gray* (*Works*, v. 47), one of the most charming papers, at once for fulness and brevity, ever contributed to our knowledge of a celebrated man. Of Boswell's *Corsica*, Gray expressed a similar opinion to Walpole (*Works*, iv. 113), and I quote the passage, because it so exactly hits at once the littleness and the greatness of Boswell, and, nearly twenty years before the masterpiece of English biography was written, shows us the possibility of a green goose doing justice to a hero. "Mr. Boswell's book I was going to recommend "to you, when I received your letter: it has pleased and moved me strangely, all (I "mean) that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time! "The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, that any fool may write a



interested in Boswell, and Paoli is not very likely to increase his interest. Having made this unavailing effort to empty his head of

Corsica, Boswell himself had visited London in the spring,\*  
 1768.  
 Æt. 40. had followed Johnson to Oxford, and was now making him the  
 hero of dinner parties at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand,  
 where Perey was quite unwarrantably attacked, Robertson slighted,  
 and Davies turned into ridicule ;—but Goldsmith is doubtless well  
 content, for a time, to escape his chance of being also “tossed  
 “and gored.”† Kindness he could not escape so easily, if Rey-  
 nolds had it in his gift. For this, too, was the year when the  
 great painter, entering the little room where a party of his brother  
 artists were in council over a plan for an Academy of Arts, was  
 instantly, all of them rising to a man, saluted “president;”‡ and  
 the year had not closed before the royal patronage was obtained  
 for the scheme, and that great institution was set on foot which  
 has since so greatly flourished, yet has had no worthier or more

“most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with  
 “veracity. Of Mr. Boswell’s truth I have not the least suspicion, because I am sure  
 “he could invent nothing of this kind. The true title of this part of his work is, a  
 “Dialogue between a Green-Goose and a Hero.” Feb. 25, 1768.

\* It was now that Hume described him as “a young gentleman, very good-  
 “humoured, very agreeable, and very mad.” Hume’s *Priv. Cor.* 131. For two  
 wonderfully ridiculous letters of Boswell’s, written during his recent foreign tour to  
 Andrew Mitchell, the English minister at Berlin, who was a great friend of old  
 Auchinleck, and had been appealed to to check James’s extravagances, see Mitchell’s  
*Memoirs and Papers*, ii. 351-8. I may also add, with special reference to the  
 “dinners” so abundantly mentioned in the text, what Wilkes some years later wrote  
 of him (*Letters*, iv. 5). “The earth,” says the patriot, describing a drought, “is as  
 “thirsty as Boswell, and as cracked in many places as he certainly is in one.”

† “When I called upon Dr. Johnson next morning, I found him highly satisfied  
 “with his colloquial prowess the preceding evening. ‘Well,’ said he, ‘we had good  
 “talk.’ BOSWELL: ‘Yes, sir; you tossed and gored several persons.’” *Boswell*,  
 iii. 58.

‡ Northcote’s *Life*, i. 166. Cunningham’s *Life*, 256-8. The great movers in the  
 project were Chambers, West, Cotes, and Moser; Reynolds at first holding himself  
 aloof, from a doubt, not as his less friendly biographer somewhat unfairly alleges,  
 that the countenance of the court would be wanting, but from a fear that the  
 mistakes of “The Incorporated Society of Artists” might again be committed. It  
 was after West had taken to him a proposed list of thirty members, and explained to  
 him enough to show that the new society started from a basis of their own which  
 might fairly be made to include all the higher objects of such an institution, that  
 Reynolds consented to join.

famous entry on its records than the appointment of Samuel Johnson as its first Professor of Ancient Literature, and of Oliver Goldsmith as its first Professor of History.

Whether the clamour of politics, noisiest when emptiest, <sup>1768.</sup>  
Æt. 40.  
 failed meanwhile to make its way into the Shoemaker's Paradise, may be more doubtful. A year of such profligate turmoil perhaps never degraded our English annals. The millennium of rioters as well as libellers seemed to have come. The abandoned recklessness of public men was seen reacting through all the grades of society; and in the mobs of Stepney-fields and St. George's were reflected the knaves and bullies of White's and St. James's. Having glanced at the causes that had made inevitable some such consequence, it only remains to state it. The election for a new Parliament, the old one dying of its seventh year in March, let loose every evil element; and Wilkes found his work half done before he threw himself into it. His defeat for London, his daring and successful attempt on Middlesex, his imprisonment pending the arguments on his outlawry (when Reynolds, an old friend, but one can hardly think a congenial one, seems to have dined with him),\* the result of those arguments, his election as alderman, and clumsy alternations of rage and fear in his opponents, confirmed him at last the representative of Liberty; and amid tumult, murder, and massacre, the sacred cap was put upon his head.† Mobs assembled round his prison to offer him help, and succeeded so far as to involve Scotch soldiers, and their ministerial employers and defenders, in the odium of having fired fatally upon unarmed men. The laws seemed to have lost their terror, the

\* *Life* by Leslie and Taylor, l. 291.

† It is curious to mark the eagerness with which the French welcomed anything of this sort, little dreaming of what was in store for themselves. "2 Aout, 1768. Il nous est venu d'Angleterre des mouchoirs à la Wilkes; ils sont d'une très belle toile. Au lieu de fleurs ils sont imprimés et contiennent la Lettre de ce prisonnier aux habitants du Comté de Middlesex. Il est représenté au milieu, une plume à la main." Bachaumont, *Mem. Soc.* iv. 80. "I happened," says Watson, afterwards Bishop of Llandaff, in the *Anecdotes of his Life* (Ed. 1818), l. 55, "to be at Paris about that time" (1768-9); "and the only question which I was asked by a Carthusian monk, who showed me his monastery, was, whether Monsieur Wilkes, or the King, had got the better?"

magistracy their means of enforcing them. In one part of London there was a riot of Irish coal-heavers which lasted nine hours, and in which eighteen persons were killed, before the Guards <sup>1768.</sup> arrived upon the scene. The merchant-sailors on the river, to <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> the number of four thousand, rose for an increase of wages, and stopped outward-bound ships from sailing till their demands were compromised. The Thames watermen, to the best of their ability, followed the example; so did the journeymen hatters, with what assistance they could give to the general confusion; and a riot even of journeymen tailors threatened to be formidable, till Sir John Fielding succeeded in quelling it. Walpole has connected these various disturbances with the "favorable Wilkes season," and tells us that in all of them was heard the cry of Liberty and its champion. Liberty by itself, to not a few of its advocates, had ceased to convey any meaning. "I take the Wilkes-and-liberty to inform you," wrote a witty merchant to his correspondents.\* It was now that Whitefield put up prayers for Wilkes before his sermons; that Dukes were made to appear in front of their houses and drink his health; that city voters in a modest way of trade refused to give him their votes unless he'd take a gift of money as well, in one instance as much as 20l;† and that the most notoriously stately and ceremonious of all the ambassadors (the Austrian) was tumbled out of his coach head over heels, to have his heels chalked with *Number 45*. In the midst of

\* *Coll. Lett.* v. 210. Wilkes used to tell with much glee that as he was accidentally walking behind an old lady, she saw his head upon a sign-post, and murmured, "He swings everywhere but where he ought." He passed her, turned round, and politely bowed. *Wilkes's Letters*, i. 112.

† Other tradesmen sent him gifts in kind, of which he specially records one of forty-five dozen of candles from a chandler. An unknown and more wealthy patriot sent him 500 guineas in a handsomely embroidered purse. Apart from these strictly personal tributes, 20,000l. was also raised by more general subscription for him. I might prolong the account indefinitely. See his *Letters*, i. 111. Lord Mahon quotes a letter of Franklin's to his son, dated 16th April, 1768. "I went last week to Winchester, and observed that for fifteen miles out of town there was scarce a door or window-shutter next the road unmarked" (with Wilkes and Liberty, and *Number 45*), "and this continued here and there quite to Winchester, which is sixty-four miles." *History*, v. 193.

a Wilkes mob the new Parliament met. "Good God," cried the Duke of Grafton, when the Duke of Richmond laughed at Lord Sandwich's proposition to send and see if the riots had ceased, "is it matter for laughter when mobs come to join the name <sup>1768.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> of Wilkes with the sacred sound of Liberty!" The poor Duke saw none of the causes that had brought this about, nor dreamt of connecting them with the social disorganisation all around him: with the seat of government in daily disorder, Ireland insurrectionary, the colonies on the eve of rebellion, and the continent overbearing and arrogant; while, to himself, a woman or a horse-race was first in the duties of life, and his allies the Bedfords, "with each of them his three thousand a-year and his three thousand bottles of claret and champagne,"\* were insensate and reckless of disgrace.

That language of Walpole is not to be adopted to its full extent, it may be true, any more than the expressions of the more terrible assailant who was now, with such signatures as Mnemon, Lucius, and Atticus,† sharpening his nameless weapons for a more enduring aim; but in neither case is the desperate bitterness to be condemned as uncalled for, simply because it involved individual injustice. The time had come when, even at the expense of individual suffering, it was well that such things should be thought

\* *Coll. Lett.* v. 206. For excellent descriptions of these scenes I may refer also to Walpole's *George the Third*, and the second volume of his *Letters to Mann*. Let me add that, waiving the question of whether or not Lord Bute still exercised personal influence at this time over the young king, which the letters I have lately quoted (*ante*, 66) show at least to have been a belief entertained in other than "vulgar" quarters (*Memorials of Fox*, i. 111), it is quite certain that the system introduced by Lord Bute continued to hold undisputed sway, and that the scenes named in the text were but the natural fruit it bore. I will add that I know of no more painful or humiliating study than that of the various private papers and "Correspondences" of the great families who were the chief actors in these scenes, which during the last twenty or thirty years have been given to the world.

† The first known communication by the writer of *Junius* appeared in the *Public Advertiser* on the 28th of April, 1767; but the letters, sixty-nine in number, signed Junius, and forming the collection with which every reader is familiar, extend only over the space from the 21st of January, 1769, to the 2nd of November, 1771. The 69th Letter, addressed to Lord Camden, is without a date; and there are other private letters to Woodfall, the printer of the *Public Advertiser*, the last two of which are dated 10th May, 1772, and 19th January, 1773.



and said; and when it was fitting that public men, privately not unamiable or dishonest, should at length be made bitterly responsible for public wrongs, whether sanctioned or committed.

<sup>1768.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 40.</sup> Lord Chatham was no worshipper of the mob; but this year roused him from his apathy, and replumed his popular fame. He saw much of what at last was impending. In "timber-merchants," who began now to contest seats in the large cities against the Selwyns and men of the aristocratic families, he saw something more than Gilly Williams's "d—d carpenters" who (according to Lord Carlisle) should be "kept in their saw-pits." A new power was about to make itself felt, and it found Chatham prepared. He withdrew his name from the ministry, already reeling under the storm of Wilkes; Shelburne soon after followed him; Camden was not long in following Shelburne; the poor Duke of Newcastle, inapt for new notions, sank into the grave with his old ones;\* and young Charles James Fox, to whom the great friend and associate of his mature life was already intimately known, for the first time heard Mr. Burke familiarly talked about at his father's table.† The latter incident may mark what the great families found it now no longer possible to affect ignorance of; though it is just as likely that his purchase of an estate induced the talk, as his late fiery speeches in the House of Commons. Burke became this year a landed proprietor. With money bequeathed him by his father and brother, and with large help from Lord Rockingham (at once intended to requite service and render it more effective), he purchased an estate in Buckinghamshire called Gregories, or Butlers-court, about a mile from the market town of Beaconsfield, and subsequently known by the latter name.‡ Assisted as he was, the

\* See Chesterfield's *Letters* (Ed. Lord Mahon), iv. 478-9.

† His father's first recorded remark upon the new man was highly characteristic. He supposed he was a wonderfully clever man; but (alluding to Burke's excessive practice of talking) "he did not like those clever fellows who could not plainly say *yes* or *no* to any question you asked them." *Memorials of Fox*, i. 66. Lord Holland would thoroughly have appreciated Goldsmith's couplet:

"Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,  
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining."

‡ He writes to Shackleton on the 1st of May, 1768: "Again elected on the same

effort must have straitened his means; for in the following year he asks a loan of a thousand pounds from Garrick, which his "dear David," his "dearest Garrick," at once accords.\* The estate was twenty-four miles from London; and within a <sup>1768.</sup><sub>Æt. 40.</sub> hundred yards of the house were the ruins of what had once been Edmund Waller's home. Gregories itself, consumed by fire, has since become a ruin; but nobler memories than the old poet's linger now round what had once been the home of Edmund Burke, and Goldsmith has his share in them.

Exciting news at the Edgeware cottage that Beaconsfield purchase at least must have been, even though the noise of Wilkes might have failed to force an entrance there. In October, Goldsmith was again in the Temple; and is to be traced at his old haunts, and in the theatres. Somewhat later in the season that now began, Garrick brought out a new tragedy by Home, which its writer had called *Rivine*; but so hateful had Wilkes again made the Scotch, that the author's name had to be suppressed, its own name to be anglicised, and a young Oxford gentleman to be brought up to the rehearsals to pass himself off as the writer.† Goldsmith discovered the trick, and is said by Davies to have proposed a hostile party against the play, not inaptly re-christened by Garrick the *Fatal Discovery*. "It would hardly be credited that this man of benevolence, for such he really was, endeavoured to muster a party 'to condemn it;'" but this, the same authority afterwards remarks, "was the transient thought of a giddy man, who upon 'the least check, would have immediately renounced it, and as 'heartily joined with a party to support the piece he had before

"interest" (Lord Verney had again returned him for Wendover), "I have made a push, 'with all I could collect of my own, and the aid of my friends, to cast a little root 'in this country. I have purchased a house, with an estate of about six hundred 'acres of land, in Buckinghamshire, twenty-four miles from London, where I now 'am. It is a place exceedingly pleasant; and I propose (God willing) to become a 'farmer in good earnest. You, who are classical, will not be displeased to hear that 'it was formerly the seat of Waller the poet, whose house, or part of it, makes 'at present the farm-house within an hundred yards of me." *Correspondence*, i. 153-4.

\* *Gar. Cor.* i. 353-4.

† See *Carlyle's Autobiography*, 509-10.

“devoted to destruction.”\* If credit is to be given at all to so doubtful a statement, it was probably renewed spleen at Garrick, whose recent patronage of Kenrick, for no apparent reason <sup>1768.</sup> than his means of mischief and his continued abuse of more <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> successful men, had not tended to induce oblivion of older offences. Kenrick's latest form of malice was the epigram; but in using it to connect Goldsmith's with other names now rife in the playbills, the wit was much less apparent than the venom.

What are your Britons, Romans, Grecians,  
Compared with thorough-bred Milesians?  
Step into Griffin's shop, he'll tell ye,  
Of Goldsmith, Bickerstaff, and Kelly. . .  
And take one Irish, evidence for t'other,  
Ev'n Homer's self is but their foster-brother.

The last allusion was to a story the humbler wits were now telling against Goldsmith. Bickerstaff had invited a party to his house to hear one of his dramatic pieces read; and among the company were Goldsmith and one Paul Hiffernan, already mentioned as one of his Grub-street protégés, of the Purdon and Pilkington class. He was an eccentric, drunken, idle, Irish creature; educated for a physician, and not without talents and even scholarship; but a continual victim to what he called *impecuniosity*, and so unprovided with self-help against the disease that he lived altogether upon the help of other people. *Where* he lived, however, nobody could ever find out: he gave his address at the Bedford; and beyond that, curiosity was baffled, though many and most amusing were its attempts to discover more: nor was it until after his death that his whereabouts was found, in one of the wretched little courts out of St. Martin's-lane. He wrote newspaper paragraphs in the morning; foraged for his dinner; slept out the early part of the night in one of the theatres; and, in return for certain critical and convivial displays which made his company attractive after play-hours, was always sure of a closing entertainment at the Black Lion in Russell-street, or the Cyder Cellar in Maiden-lane.†

\* *Life of Garrick*, ii. 155, 168. And see Lord Campbell's *Chancellors*, vi. 85.

† I derive my account of this curious literary mortal from some papers by Cooke

Latterly, he had taken altogether to dramatic criticism, for which he had some talent,—his earliest Irish efforts in that line, when he ought to have been practising his profession, having been thought mighty pleasant by Burke, then a lad at Dublin College; and <sup>1768.</sup>  
this, with its usual effect upon the Drury-lane manager, had <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> recently obtained him a sort of pension from Garrick. It was the great actor's worst weakness to involve himself thus with the meaner newspaper men; and it was only this very year he was warned, by a letter from Foote, of its danger in the case of Hiffernan. "Upon 'the whole,'" wrote that master in the art of literary libel, and there is nothing like the voice of a Gracchus for effective complaint against sedition, "it is, I think, worthy of consideration, whether there is 'not something immoral, as well as impolitic, in encouraging a 'fellow, who, without parts, principles, property, or profession, has 'subsisted for these twenty years by the qualities of a literary 'footpad.'" Precisely that newspaper jobbery it was, however, to whose success the absence of parts, principles, property, and profession is essential, which had procured Hiffernan his invitation to the reading of Bickerstaff's play. A good dinner preluded the reading, and much justice was done to this, and to the glass which circulated for half an hour afterwards, by "Hiff:" but his judgment, or enjoyment, of the play was much less clearly evinced; and when the first batch of opinions were collected at the end of the first act, "Very well, by —, very well!" was all that could be got from him. Alas for what followed! "About the middle of 'the second act,'" says the teller of the anecdote, "he began to 'nod; and in a little time afterwards, to snore so loud that the 'author could scarcely be heard. Bickerstaff felt a little embarrassed; but raising his voice, went on. Hiffernan's tones,

in the *Europ. Mag.* (xxv. 110-15, and 179-84). Cooke incidentally remarks in the course of them, that one of Hiffernan's extraordinary and unaccountable publications (the *Philosophic Whim*) gave rise to "one of the last flashes of poor Goldsmith. "'How does this poor devil of an author,' says a friend, 'contrive to get credit even 'with his bookseller for paper, print, or advertising?' 'Oh, my dear sir,' says 'Goldsmith, 'very easily—he steals the broom ready made.'" *Europ. Mag.* xxv. 180.



"however, also increased; till at last Goldsmith could hold out no longer, but cried out, 'Never mind the brute, Bick! go on. So

" 'he would have served Homer if he was here, and reading  
 1768. " 'his own works.' " \*

Æt. 40.

Nothing could be easier for Kenrick than to turn this into a comparison of Bickerstaff to Homer; and no laugh was heartier than Garrick's at the new proof of Goldsmith's folly. But for his countenance of the libeller he was doomed to be severely punished, and in connection with this very Bickerstaff. Some four years after the present date, that wretched man was driven from society with an infamous stain, and Kenrick grossly connected it by allusion with Garrick; to whom at the very time, as we now know, the miserable culprit was writing from his hiding-place the most piteous petitions for charity that one human being ever addressed to another.† An action was commenced against the libeller, and

\* *European Magazine*, xxv. 184. Nevertheless Hiffennan, according to Cooke, made his own best excuse next day, and one which Goldsmith was ready enough to admit as such; for when the latter asked him how he could behave in that manner, the other coolly replied, "It's my usual way—I never *can* resist sleeping at a pantomime." The close of his life was of a piece with the rest of it. He was found dead in his garret.

† See Letter in *Garrick Correspondence* (i. 473), written in French, dated "St. Malo, Juin 24, 1772," and endorsed by Garrick, "From that poor wretch Bickerstaff. I could not answer it." After an interval of nearly five years Bickerstaff wrote again (ii. 208): "I am in the greatest distress; so great that words cannot express it. I remember that during the interval of my small prosperity, I presented you at different times, with some trifles; their value, I believe, might be about ten pounds: these would now feed and clothe me." In the same letter he refers to Kenrick, justly enough, as "the vilest miscreant that ever dishonoured a pretension to literature, and for whom there should be a whip in the hand of every honest man to lash him out of human society." Yet to this wretched being, himself by his own misconduct lashed out of human society, the stage was indebted for several very pure and pleasing entertainments, among them *Love in a Village*, *The Maid of the Mill*, *Lionel and Clarissa*, *The Spoiled Child*, *The Padlock*, &c; and we have seen in the course of this narrative that such men as Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Foote, Murphy, and others, were indebted to him for occasional hospitality. "I closed with the offer of Mr. Garrick's friendship," says Murphy, persisting in one of his many querulous disputes with the manager of Drury-lane, "and dined with him and Dr. Johnson at Bickerstaff's house. After dinner the plays were mentioned. 'Prithee,' says Dr. Johnson, 'don't talk of plays; if you do, you will quarrel again.' He was a true prophet." Murphy to Garrick, 13th Jan. 1773. *Gar. Cor.* i. 520. I may add that this miserable Bickerstaff case called forth a celebrated and admirable saying of Johnson's. Mrs. Piozzi tells us that "when Mr. Bickerstaff's flight confirmed the report of his guilt, and Mr. Thrale said, in answer to Johnson's

dropped upon ample apology.\* "I did not believe him guilty, "but did it to plague the fellow," said Kenrick to Thomas Evans. The worthy bookseller never spoke to him again.

Scoundrel as he was, it need not be denied that he had some <sup>1768.</sup>cleverness. <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> Johnson hit it off exactly when he described it as a faculty that made him *public*, without making him *known*. He used to lecture at the Devil and other taverns, on every conceivable subject from Shakespeare to the perpetual motion, which he thought he had discovered; having been, before he got his Scotch doctorship and became Griffiths's hack, a scale or rule maker. Hence Johnson's quiet answer to the attack on his *Shakespeare*, that he could not consider himself "bound by his rules;" and similar advice he always gave to Goldsmith, the next most frequent object of his attack. Nothing escaped this Ishmael of criticism, not even the *Traveller*. But "never mind, sir," Johnson would say at some new venom, as he said always of the fellow's outrages on himself, "a man whose business it is to be talked of, is much "helped by being attacked." He explained the reason afterwards to Boswell. "Fame, sir, is a shuttlecock: if it be struck only at "one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground; to keep it "up, it must be struck at both ends." So too, on Boswell himself remarking, four years after the present, that he thought Goldsmith the better for the attacks so frequently made upon him, "Yes, "sir," was the reply; "but he does not think so yet. When "Goldsmith and I published each of us something at the same "time,† we were given to understand that we might review each

"astonishment, that he had long been a suspected man: 'By those who look close "to the ground, dirt will be seen, sir,' was the lofty reply; 'I hope I see things "from a greater distance.'" Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 168. I quote a letter from Mr. Macready on this passage: "The *Spoiled Child* was (I am pretty certain) not written "by Bickerstaff. It was (the skeleton of it) drawn out by Ford, I think he was "called Dr. Ford, with whom Mrs. Jordan first lived in London, and whom she left, "on his declining to marry her, for the Duke of Clarence—saying, 'If I am to be a "——, it will be better to be a prince's than a private person's.' Mrs. Jordan made "up the fun of the piece, such as it is."

\* See *Gar. Corr.* i. 477.

† Johnson's allusion to his own writing must here mean the edition of *Shakespeare's* the *False Alarm*, or the *Futland Islands* pamphlet; but as the two latter were

"other. Goldsmith was for accepting the offer. I said, No, set "reviewers at defiance." \* Unhappily, his friend never could do this ; and even the lesson of "retaliation" was learnt by him <sup>1768,</sup> too late. Kenrick remained, to the last, his evil genius ; and <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> it seems to have been with a sort of uneasy desire to propitiate him that Goldsmith yielded to Griffin's solicitation at the close of the present year, and consented to take part in the editing of a new *Gentleman's Journal* in which Kenrick was a leading writer, and for which Hiffernan, Kelly, and some others were engaged. It died soon after it was born ; and, on some one remarking to Goldsmith what an extraordinary thing so sudden a death was, "Not at all, sir," he answered : "a very common case ; it died "of too many Doctors." †

An amusing illustration, which belongs nearly to this time, of inconveniences sometimes undergone from his Grub-street protégés and pensioners, will properly dismiss for the present this worshipful company of Kenricks and Hiffernans. The hero of the anecdote had all the worst qualities of the tribe ; and "how do you think "he served me ?" said Goldsmith, relating the incident to a friend. "Why, sir, after staying away two years, he came one evening into "my chambers, half drunk, as I was taking a glass of wine with

very recent, it is most probable that the *Shakespeare* was meant ; especially as Goldsmith, within a few months of its appearance, was also bringing out the *Traveller*, the *Essays*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and we know moreover that Johnson was writing reviews at this particular time for both the *Critical Review* and the *London Chronicle*.

\* *Boswell*, iv. 306-7. v. 153. Johnson clinched his argument by a capital anecdote of old Bentley. "Why, they'll write you down," said somebody to the slashing old controversialist. "No, sir," he replied, "depend upon it, no man was ever "written down but by himself." What he said in a letter to Mrs. Thrale is also much to the purpose. "Of the imitation of my style, in a criticism on Gray's Church-yard, I forgot to make mention. The author is, I believe, utterly unknown, for Mr. "Steevens cannot hunt him out ; I know little of it, for though it was sent me I "never cut the leaves open. I had a letter with it representing it to me as my own "work ; in such an account to the publick there may be humour, but to myself it was "neither serious nor comical. I suspect the writer to be wrong-headed ; as to the "noise which it makes, I have never heard it, and am inclined to believe that few "attacks either of ridicule or invective make much noise, but by the help of those "they provoke." *Piozzi Letters*, ii. 289.

† *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 492.

“Topham Beauclerc and General Oglethorpe ; and, sitting himself down, with most intolerable assurance inquired after my health and literary pursuits, as if we were upon the most friendly footing. I was at first so much ashamed of ever having <sup>1768.</sup> known such a fellow, that I stifled my resentment, and drew <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> him into a conversation on such topics as I knew he could talk upon ; in which, to do him justice, he acquitted himself very respectably : when all of a sudden, as if recollecting something, he pulled two papers out of his pocket, which he presented to me with great ceremony, saying, ‘ Here, my dear friend, is a quarter of a pound of tea, and a half pound of sugar, I have brought you ; for though it is not in my power at present to pay you the two guineas you so generously lent me, you, nor any man else, shall ever have it to say that I want gratitude.’ This,” added Goldsmith, “ was too much. I could no longer keep in my feelings, but desired him to turn out of my chambers directly, which he very coolly did, taking up his tea and sugar ; and I never saw him afterwards.” \* Certainly Hogarth should have survived to depict this scene. No less a pencil could have given us the fastidious face of Beauclerc, than whom no man ever showed a more uniform and even painful sense of the ridiculous, when the screws of tea and sugar were produced !

Oglethorpe was a recent acquaintance, and has become, by the compliment of Pope and in the page of Boswell, an historical name. Now thirty years older than Goldsmith, he survived him upwards of eleven years : † and to the last preserved, not only that love of

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 260. Cooke says that Pilkington was the hero of this anecdote, which Goldsmith always told with extraordinary humour ; but I doubt if Pilkington reappeared after the white mice. *Ante*, i. 262-3.

† Though he served under Prince Eugene against the Turks, he only obtained his full rank as General a year or two before the present date (in 1765). In April 1785 Walpole thus describes him : “ General Oglethorpe, who sometimes visits me, and who is ninety-five, has the activity of youth when compared with me. His eyes, ears, articulation, limbs, and memory would suit a boy, if a boy could recollect a century backwards. His teeth are gone ; he is a shadow, and a wrinkled one ; but his spirits and his spirit are in full bloom : two years and a half ago, he challenged a neighbouring gentleman for trespassing on his manor.” *Letters to Mann*, iv. 218. On the other hand, see Madame D’Arblay’s *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*,



literature and genius which made him the first active patron of Johnson's *London* while yet the author was quite unknown, but that

“strong benevolence of soul” which connects his memory  
<sup>1768.</sup>  
 with the colonisation of Georgia, as well as those Jacobite  
 leanings which involved him in a court-martial after the affair  
 of '45, and subsequently shelved him as a soldier. He became a member of the House of Commons, sat in several Parliaments, compelled

a reluctant inquiry into prisons and punishments, and distinguished himself as much by humane as by high-tory crotchets. The sympathies which attracted him to Goldsmith, and continued their intimacy, appear in the commencement of the only letter that survives of their correspondence. “How just, sir,” writes Oglethorpe, “were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest.” And he encloses five pounds for his friend to distribute as he may think proper.\* Nor were they without the other point of agreement which had attracted Oglethorpe to Johnson. Such associations as Goldsmith had brought from Ireland had disposed him less to the dominant race, of which by birth and breeding he was part, than to the cause of the native population. Thus, though the social bearing of politics always interested him most, and he cared little at any time for its party questions, he had something of a half-fanciful Jacobite leaning; dabbled now and then in Jacobite opinions; and was as ready for a hit at the Hanoverian-rat as Johnson himself. An anecdote of their stroll one day into Westminster Abbey has preserved for us pleasant record of this. They stood together in Poets' Corner; surveyed the dead but sceptred sovereigns that there, from storied urn and monumental bust, still rule and glorify the world; and the natural thought rose probably to the minds of both, “Perhaps our names, too, will one day be mingled with theirs.”

ii. 274. Let me add that he read without spectacles to the last, and retained the use of his senses and his limbs, thus commemorated by Walpole, till he died. He had shot snipes in Conduit-mead, where Conduit-street and Bond-street now stand. See an agreeable notice of him in Lord Mahon's *History*, v. 73-5.

\* *Percy Memoir*, 95-6.

Johnson broke the silence, and whispered the hope in a Latin verse,

“Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.”

They walked away from the Abbey together, and arrived at Temple-bar ; where the ghastly remains of the last Jacobite execution were still rotting on the spikes above ; and where, till

1768.

Æt. 42.



not long before, people had made a trade of letting spy-glasses at “a halfpenny a look.” Here Goldsmith stopped Johnson, pointing up, and slyly returned his whisper,

“Forsitan et nostrum . . miscebitur ISTIS.”\*

\* *Boswell*, iii. 232.

## CHAPTER IV.

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### LABOURS AND ENJOYMENTS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

1769.

WITH the opening of 1769, we find Goldsmith busily engaged upon new projects, his *Roman History* being completed; and it was now, Percy tells us, that Johnson took him to Oxford, and <sup>1769.</sup> obtained for him the degree *ad eundem* of M.B.\* The fact <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> must rest on the bishop's authority; for the present Oxford registrar, though "he inclines to believe that the Bishop of Dro-more's impression was correct," finds a chasm in the University register, which leaves it without positive corroboration. They were at this time much together, it is certain; and if Johnson's opinion of the genius of Goldsmith was now at its highest, it was repaid with very hearty affection. "Look," said Gray, as in walking this year with a friend through a crowded street of the city he saw a large uncouth figure "rolling" before them: "look, look, Bonstetten! the Great Bear! There goes *Ursa Major*!" It was Johnson.† "Ah!" said Goldsmith, when such expressions

\* *Memoir*, 36 (note). The wording of the passage might imply that Goldsmith himself was the authority. "In February, 1769, Dr. Goldsmith made an excursion to Oxford with Dr. Johnson, and was admitted in that celebrated university *ad eundem gradum*, which he said was that of M.B." Yet in the text of the *Memoir* the writer had just expressed it as doubtful whether he ever took any medical degree in a foreign university.

† Sir Egerton Brydges's *Autobiography*, ii. 111. For an interesting account of Bonstetten, who died in Geneva little more than forty years ago at the age of 87, and whom Brydges knew in that city as "a lively little man, with smooth, round, blooming cheeks," see the same volume, 378-399. If the anecdote related in the text be true, Boswell is wrong in supposing that his father, old Auchinlech, first applied

were repeated to him, "they may say that. Johnson, to be sure, "has a roughness of manner, but no man alive has a more tender heart. He has nothing of the bear but his skin." Their entertainer at Oxford was the accomplished lawyer, Chambers, at this time Vinerian Professor, and five years later a judge in India; in whose rooms his more celebrated townsman Scott (both were Newcastle men, and on the old panel of the grammar-school to which I went in my boyhood I remember cutting my name underneath theirs) was afterwards introduced to Johnson. Chambers had lately been admitted a member of the Gerrard-street club.

His election, with those of Percy and George Colman, took place on the resignation of Hawkins. The records of the early years of the club are really so scanty and imperfect, that it is difficult to ascertain the simplest fact in connection with it: but it appears certain, as I formerly stated, that on the occasion of this second ballot for members it was resolved to enlarge the original number to twelve; when, as a result of the resignation of Hawkins, and of Beauclerc's forfeiture by continued non-attendance, four vacancies had to be filled. To the first, Percy was elected; the second was re-claimed by Beauclerc, whose recent marriage with Lady Di Spencer on her divorce from Lord Bolingbroke sufficiently explained his temporary withdrawal;\* and the third and fourth were filled by Chambers and George Colman.† It was on the

the phrase to Johnson in 1773, "in a sly abrupt expression to one of his brethren on "the bench of the Court of Session in which Johnson was then standing" (v. 132-3), after that ever famous discussion about the merits of Cromwell, which ended with the startling and unexpected exclamation that left the old judge decidedly victorious over *Ursa Major*: "God, doctor! he gart kings ken that they had a *lith* in their "necks"—he taught kings they had a *joint* in their necks.

\* "There is an affair broke out," writes Hume to the Countess de Boufflers, on the 27th November, 1767, "which makes a great noise, between Lady Bolingbroke and "your friend Beauclerc. This lady was separated from her husband some time ago; "but 'tis pretended bore a child lately to Mr. Beauclerc; and it is certain her "husband has begun a process for her divorce, in which nobody doubts of his success. It is a great pity: she is handsome, and agreeable, and ingenious, far beyond "the ordinary rate." *Private Correspondence*, 251-2.

† "I was received therein," says Percy (*Nichols's Illustrations*, vii. 311), "on "Monday evening, 15th February, 1768: for at that time, and for several years, the



occasion of this slight increase that Goldsmith seems to have urged the expediency of a larger infusion of new men. "It would

"give the club an agreeable variety," he thought; "there  
 1769.  
 Æt. 41. "could now be nothing new among the members, for they  
 "had travelled over each other's minds."\* This nettled Johnson, being too much in his own way. "Sir," he said, "you  
 "have not travelled over my mind, I promise you." Nevertheless, Reynolds agreed with Goldsmith, thinking that life wanted colour and diversity as much as his own canvases did; and immediately before Goldsmith died, the number was increased to twenty. But from that time Johnson took little interest in the meetings. Almost all the rising men of the day were whigs, cursed whigs, *bottomless* whigs, as he prematurely called Burke; and the spectacle of Charles Fox in the chair quoting *Homer* and *Fielding* to the astonishment of Joe Warton, was one he could not get reconciled to.† Within three years, he was himself the advocate of a yet further increase to thirty; and the form the club then assumed was precisely what he wished to bring it to: "a mere miscellaneous collection of conspicuous men, without any determinate character." So, to the present day, it has continued. It may be said to have ceased to be the Literary club as soon as it became necessary for outsiders to call it so: and, though still *stat magni*

"club always met to sup and spend the evening every Monday during the winter and "spring months." But for this decisive intimation, I should have been disposed to think that the change had certainly been made before the first performance of the *Good-natured Man*.

\* Mrs. Piozzi gives the remark in her own *wt y*. "No man," she says, speaking of Johnson, "loved laughing better, and his vein of humour was rich, and apparently "inexhaustible; though Dr. Goldsmith said once to him, 'We should change companies oftener; we exhaust one another, and shall soon be both of us worn out.' "Poor Goldsmith was to him indeed like the earthen pot to the iron one in Fontaine's fables; it had been better for him perhaps that they had changed companions oftener; yet no experience of his antagonist's strength hindered him from continuing the contest. He used to remind me always of that verse in *Berni*:

"'Il pover uomo che non sen' èra accorto,  
 Andava combattendo—ed era morto.'"

*Anecdotes*, 178-9.

† Letters of Boswell to Malone in appendix to Croker's *Boswell*, 839; and see *ante*, i. 310-11.

*nominis umbra*, no effort has been made to revive its great, indeed its sole distinction.\*

Colman's election seemed a studied slight to Garrick, but his claim was not inconsiderable. It was a choice between <sup>1769.</sup> rival managers and rival wits; eager little figures both; <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> both social and most agreeable men; † and the scale was easily turned. Langton describes a club incident soon after Colman's admission. He says that Goldsmith, on the occasion of a play brought out by Mrs. Lennox (a very ingenious, deserving, and not very fortunate woman, who wrote the clever novel of the *Female Quixote*, and a somewhat silly book about Shakespeare, to which Johnson, a great friend of hers, was suspected to have contributed), told Johnson at the club that a person had advised him to go and hiss it, because she had attacked the great poet in her book called *Shakespeare Illustrated*. "And did you not tell him,"

\* "Some slight curiosities of literature may be gleaned from the records of the club. Since 1832, all the members present are wont, before they separate, to subscribe their names, but in previous years it was the presiding member only; and on one occasion, the 23rd of April, 1793, when Boswell filled the chair, his signature appears most unlike his usual one, sprawling in blotted zigzags across the page, and clearly denoting one of those Bacchanalian excesses (confined, let us hope, to him singly) such as he relates of himself in the *isle of Skye*. In contrast with this too convivial scene, may be mentioned one of solitary grandeur. On December 13th, 1825, the Earl of Liverpool, being then Prime Minister, resolved to dine at the club. By a singular chance, no other member happened to form the same purpose for that day, and thus Lord Liverpool passed the evening entirely alone. It appears from the books that the Prime Minister summoned to his aid one bottle of Madeira, of which however we may be sure that, according to his usual custom, he took but a very moderate share. 'This,' as a veteran and much-respected member writes to me, 'was the day of the great run on the London bankers, when Mr. Huskisson said that the whole financial transactions of England were within half-an-hour of being reduced to barter; and the Prime Minister of England being the only man who dined at the club on that day, is one of the most singular events that I know of in personal history.'" Lord Mahon's *History*, vi. 315-16. A complete list of all the members, from its foundation up to the year 1835 (by no means correct, however, as to the dates of the respective elections), will be found in Appendix to *Boswell*, ii. 326-9.

† The persons of both are thus hit off by Garrick, in a letter written when both were thoroughly pleased and satisfied with each other. "But humour, my dear Coly, and scenes that shall be all alive alive ho, only proceed from men of small stature, whose eyes are either quite asleep or quite awake,—in short, from men who laugh heartily, and have small scars at the ends of their noses." George Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 256.

returned Johnson sharply, "that he was a rascal?" "No, sir," said Goldsmith, "I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said." "Nay, sir," was the reply, "if he lied, it is <sup>1769.</sup> "a different thing." Colman was sitting by, while this <sub>Æt. 41.</sub> passed; and, dropping his voice out of Johnson's hearing, slyly remarked to Langton, "Then the proper expression should 'have been, *Sir, if you don't lie, you're a rascal.*'\*" The play was produced at Colman's theatre with the title of the *Sister*, and encountered so strong an opposition that it was never repeated: but that the audience was not impartial may be suspected from Langton's anecdote, and it is borne out by a reading of the comedy itself. Though with too much sentiment, it is both amusing and interesting; and the Strawberry-hill critics who abused it, and afterwards pronounced Burgoyne's *Heiress* "the finest comedy in 'the English language,'" might have had the justice to discover that three of the characters of the fashionable General† were stolen from this very *Sister* of poor Mrs. Lennox. Goldsmith, however, had nothing to reproach himself with. He not only refrained from joining the dissentients, but assisted the comedy (perhaps first disposed to sympathise with it because Garrick had rejected it) by an epilogue written in his liveliest strain, and spoken by pretty Mrs. Bulkley.

Goldsmith has had few competitors in that style of writing. His prologues and epilogues are the perfection of the *vers de société*. Formality and ill-humour are exorcised by their cordial wit, which transforms the theatre to a drawing-room, and the audience into friendly guests. There is a playful touch, an easy, airy elegance, which, when joined to terseness of expression, sets it off with a finished beauty and incomparable grace; but few of our English poets have written this style successfully. The French, who in-

\* *Boswell*, vii. 358.

† In this remark I do not desire to detract from the real merit of a very pleasant comedy by an agreeable man, though I cannot quite agree in what is said of it either by Walpole or Horne Tooke, who in his *Diversions of Purley* calls it (412), "one little morsel of false moral excepted, the most perfect and meritorious comedy," "without exception, of any on our stage."

vented the name for it, have been almost its only practised cultivators. Goldsmith's genius for it will nevertheless bear comparison with even theirs. He could be playful without childishness, humorous without coarseness, and sharply satirical without a <sup>1769.</sup> <sub>Æt. 41.</sub> particle of anger. Enough remains, for proof, in his collected verse ; but in private letters that have perished, many most charming specimens have undoubtedly been lost. For with such enchanting facility it flowed from him, that with hardly any of his friends in the higher social circles which he now began to enter, did it fail to help him to a more gracious acceptance, to warmer and more cordial intimacy. It takes but the touch of nature to please highest and lowest alike ; and, whether he thanked Lord Clare or the manager of Ranelagh, answered an invitation to the charming Miss Hornecks or supplied author or actor with an epilogue, the same exquisite tact, the same natural art, the same finished beauty of humour and refinement, recommended themselves to all.

The Miss Hornecks, girls of nineteen and seventeen, were acquaintances made during this year ; and they soon ripened into friends. They were the daughters of Mrs. Horneck, Captain Kane Horneck's widow ; whose Devonshire family had connected her with Reynolds, and so introduced her to Goldsmith. Her only son Charles, the "Captain in Lace" as they now fondly called him, had entered the Guards in the preceding year, and seems to have been as cordial and goodnatured as her daughters were handsome and young. The eldest, Catherine, "Little Comedy" she was called, was already engaged to Henry William Bunbury (second son of a baronet of old family in Suffolk, whose elder son Charles had lately succeeded to the title) ; who is still remembered as "Geoffrey Gambado," and one of the cleverest amateur artists and social caricaturists of his day. The youngest, Mary, had no declared lover until a year after Goldsmith's death, nor was married until three years after that engagement to Colonel Gwyn ; but already she had the loving nickname of the "Jessamy Bride," and exerted strange fascination over Goldsmith. Heaven knows what impossible dreams may at times have visited the awkward, unattractive



man of letters !\* But, whether at any time aspiring to other regard than his genius and his simplicity might claim, at least for these the sisters heartily liked him; and perhaps the happiest hours  
 1769.  
 of the later years of his life were passed in their society.  
 Æt. 41.  
 Burke, who was their guardian, tenderly remembered in his premature old age the delight they had given him from their childhood; † their social as well as personal charms are uniformly spoken of by all; and when Hazlitt met the younger sister in Northcote's painting-room some forty-three years ago (she survived Little Comedy upwards of forty years, and died not more than thirty years since), she was still talking of her favourite Dr. Goldsmith.

\* This hint was first thrown out by me; but Mr. Washington Irving, who has done me the honour to copy it and many other things from the first edition of this biography, goes somewhat too far in accepting the suggestion as if it were an ascertained fact, and proceeding to instal the "Jessamy Bride" in all the honours of a complete conquest of Goldsmith, which, as he tells his readers (*Life of Goldsmith*, 370), "has hung a poetical wreath above her grave." In Mr. Irving's little book, the "Jessamy Bride" becomes the very centre of all Goldsmith's hopes and thoughts in latter life. If there is a dance, the Jessamy Bride must of course be his "partner" (308); if there is an expensive suit of clothes, it is to "win favour in the "eyes of the Jessamy Bride" (228); if there is an additional extravagance of wardrobe, "the bright eyes of the Jessamy Bride" are made responsible for it (255); if he cannot resist an invitation of Mr. Bunbury's, it is "especially as the Jessamy Bride "would of course be among the guests" (275); if "a blue velvet suit" makes sudden appearance in Mr. Filby's bills, "again we hold the Jessamy Bride responsible for "this splendour of wardrobe" (304); if she attends a rehearsal of one of his comedies, it is the Jessamy Bride's presence that "may have contributed to flutter the anxious "heart of the author" (312); as death approaches, "the Jessamy Bride has beamed "her last smiles upon the poor poet" (360); and when all is over, a simple request of Mrs. Bunbury and her sister for a memorial of their pleasant friend hereafter to be recorded, is turned into "the enthusiasm" of "one mourner" for his memory. "the Jessamy Bride's," which "might have soothed the bitterness of death" (369). This is running down a suggestion indeed!—and, with whatever success for romance-loving readers, less pleasantly, it must be admitted, for sober seekers after truth.

† From Beaconsfield on the 1st of Feb. 1792, we thus find Burke writing to Mrs. Gwyn: "Your approbation of anything I do is a satisfaction I feel very sensibly. "From your childhood I have admired your heart, and had a very good opinion of "your judgment; and wished you all manner of happiness with an affection which "might without violence be called paternal." In the same letter he speaks of the "very declining way" of "our old friend, that great ornament of his country and "delight of society, Sir Joshua Reynolds." *Hanbury Correspondence*, 400-1. Burke (with his cousin William) was trustee under the will of Capt. Kane Horneck, the father of the young ladies; and seems to have become involved in disputes respecting the administration of the trust.

with recollection and affection unabated by age. Still, too, she was beautiful, beautiful even in years. The Graces had triumphed over Time. "I could almost fancy the shade of Goldsmith in the room," says Hazlitt, "looking round <sup>1769.</sup> <sub>Æt. 41.</sub> "with complacency."\*

Soon had the acquaintance become a friendship. To a dinner-party given this year by their mother's friend and Reynolds's physician, Dr. (afterwards Sir George) Baker, the sisters appear at the last moment to have taken on themselves to write a joint invitation to Goldsmith, to which he replied with some score of humorous couplets, at the top of which was scrawled, "This is a poem! This is a copy of verses!"

Your mandate I got,  
 You may all go to pot;  
 Had your senses been right,  
 You'd have sent before night;  
 As I hope to be saved,  
 I put off being shaved;  
 For I could not make bold,  
 While the matter was cold,  
 To meddle in suds,  
 Or to put on my duds;  
 So tell Horneck and Nesbitt,  
 And Baker and his bit,  
 And Kauffman beside,  
 And the Jessamy Bride,  
 With the rest of the crew,  
 The Reynoldses two,  
 Little Comedy's face,  
 And the Captain in Lace—  
 (By the bye you may tell him,  
 I have something to sell him;  
 Of use I insist,  
 When he comes to enlist.  
 Your worships must know  
 That a few days ago,  
 An order went out,  
 For the foot guards so stout  
 To wear tails in high taste,  
 Twelve inches at least:  
 Now I've got him a scale  
 To measure each tail,

\* *Conversations of Northcote*, 95. Mrs. Gwyn died in 1840, within a few days of the completion of her eighty-eighth year.

1769.  
Æt. 41.

To lengthen a short tail,  
And a long one to curtail.)—

Yet how can I, when vext,

Thus stray from my text?

Tell each other to rue

Your Devonshire crew,

For sending so late

To one of my state.

But 'tis Reynolds's way

From wisdom to stray,

And Angelica's whim

To be frolick like him;

But, alas! your good worships, how could they be wiser,  
When both have been spoil'd in to-day's *Advertiser*? \*

Does not this lifelike humour re-furnish the hospitable table, reanimate the pleasant circle around it, and set us down again with Reynolds and his Angelica? The most celebrated of the women painters had found no jealousy in the leading artist of England. His was the first portrait that made Angelica Kauffman famous here; to him she owed her introduction to the Conways and Stanhopes; he befriended her in the misery of her first thoughtless marriage, now not many months dissolved, though himself (it was said) not unmoved by tenderer thoughts than of friendship; and he placed her in the list of the members of the new Academy. It was little wonder that their names should have passed together into print, and become a theme for the poet's corner of the *Advertiser*.

In the same number of that journal appeared an advertisement of the *Roman History*, which had been first announced in the preceding August, and was issued in the May of the present year. It

\* *Miscellaneous Works*, iv. 132-3. The *Advertiser's* compliment ran thus:

"While fair Angelica, with matchless grace,  
"Paints Conway's lovely form and Stanhope's face;  
"Our hearts to beauty willing homage pay,  
"We praise, admire, and gaze our souls away.  
"But when the likeness she hath done for thee,  
"O Reynolds! with astonishment we see,  
"Forced to submit, with all our pride we own,  
"Such strength, such harmony excell'd by none,  
"And thou art rivall'd by thyself alone."

was in two octavo volumes of five hundred pages each, was described as for the use of schools and colleges, and obtained at once a very large sale. What Goldsmith has given as his reason for writing it, that other histories of the "period were either <sup>1769.</sup> ~~too voluminous for common use, or too meanly written to~~ <sub>Æt. 41.</sub> "please," will suffice also to explain its success. It was a compact and not a big book, and it was charmingly written. The critics received it well; and one of them had the grace to regret that "the author of one of the best poems that has appeared since those of Mr. Pope, should not apply wholly to works of imagination." Johnson thought, on the other hand, that the writer's time had been occupied worthily; and when, a year or two after this, in a dinner conversation at Topham Beauclerc's, he was putting Goldsmith in the first class not only as poet and comic writer but also as historian, and Boswell exploded a protest in behalf of the Scotch writers of history, Johnson more decisively roared out his preference for his friend over "the verbiage of Robertson and the foppery of Dalrymple."\* Hume he had never read, because of his infidelity; but Robertson, he protested, might have put twice as much into his book as he had done, whereas Goldsmith had put into his as much as the book would hold. This, he affirmed, was the great art: for the man who tells the world shortly what

\* BOSWELL: "Will you not admit the superiority of Robertson, in whose History we find such penetration, such painting?" JOHNSON: "Sir, you must consider how that penetration and that painting are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw, draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds as Sir Joshua paints faces in a history-piece: he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as a romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his History. Now, Robertson might have put twice as much into his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool: the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, sir; I always thought Robertson would be crushed by his own weight,—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know: Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils: 'Read over your compositions, and whenever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out.'" Boswell, iii. 280-1.



it wants to know, will, with his plain full narrative, please again and again; while the more eumbrous writer, still interposing himself before what you wish to know, is crushed with his own weight, and buried under his own ornaments. "Goldsmith's abridgement," he added, "is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to say that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the *Roman History*, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a *Natural History*, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian Tale."

For this *Natural History* the first agreement dates as early as the close of February in the present year, five years before it was completed and published. It is made between Griffin and Goldsmith: and stipulates that the history is to be in eight volumes, each containing "from twenty-five to twenty-seven sheets of pica print;" that for each, a hundred guineas are to be paid on its delivery in manuscript; that for this consideration the author is to make over all his right and title to, and in, the copy; that "Doctor Goldsmith is to set about the work immediately, and to finish the whole as soon as he conveniently can;" and that (this is put as a rider to the agreement, with fresh signatures) "if the work makes less than eight volumes the Doctor is to be paid in proportion." Soon after the memorandum thus drawn up the book was begun, but it was worked at in occasional intervals only: for, when the first month's sale of the *Roman History* had established its success, Davies tempted him with an offer of five hundred pounds for a *History of England* in four volumes, to be "written and compiled in the space of two years" from the date of the agreement, but not to be paid for until delivered and the printer had given his opinion that the quantity of matter stipulated for was complete;\* and this later labour superseded that of the earlier con-

\* The agreement, dated 13th of June, 1769, is printed in the *Percy Memoir*, 78, with the particular mention that both this, and a subsequent one, also with Davies, for abridgment of the *Roman History*, "were drawn up by Dr. Goldsmith himself."

tract. There is no reason to believe that any money was advanced on the *English History*; and the preservation of the specific agreement enables us to test the truth of one of Miss Hawkins's most delicate anecdotes. She says that soon after Goldsmith had contracted with the booksellers for this particular compilation, for which he was to be paid five hundred guineas, he went to Mr. Cadell and told him he was in imminent danger of being arrested; that Cadell immediately called a meeting of the proprietors, and prevailed on them to advance him a considerable part of the sum, which, by the original agreement, he was not entitled to till after a twelvemonth from the publication of his work; and that, on a day which Mr. Cadell had named for giving the needy author an answer, Goldsmith came and received the money, under pretence of instantly satisfying his creditors; whereupon Cadell, to discover the truth of his pretext, watched whither he went, and after following him to Hyde-park-corner saw him get into a postchaise, "in which a woman of the town was waiting for him, and with whom, it afterwards appeared, he went to

1769.  
Æt. 41.

This fact induces me to subjoin them, if only to preserve such examples of his business-style! The first runs thus: "MEMORANDUM. Russel-street, Covent-garden. "It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith M.B. on the one hand, and Thomas Davies, "bookseller, of Russel-street, Covent-garden, on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith "shall write for Thomas Davies, an History of England, from the birth of the "British Empire, to the death of George the Second, in four volumes, octavo, of the "size and the letter of the Roman History, written by Oliver Goldsmith. The said "History of England shall be written and compiled in the space of two years from "the date hereof. And when the said history is written and delivered in manuscript, "the printer giving his opinion that the quantity above mentioned is completed, "that then Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid by Thomas Davies, the sum of five "hundred pounds sterling, for having written and compiled the same. It is agreed "also, that Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work. In witness "whereof we have set our names this thirteenth of June, 1769. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. "THOMAS DAVIES." For the abridged History, the subjoined was the prepared "MEMORANDUM. September 15, 1770. It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith "M.B. and Thomas Davies, of Covent-garden, bookseller, that Oliver Goldsmith "shall abridge for Thomas Davies the book entitled Goldsmith's Roman History in "two volumes 8vo into one volume in 12mo, so as to fit it for the use of such as will "not be at the expence of that in 8vo. For the abridging of the said history and "for putting his name thereto, said Thomas Davies shall pay Oliver Goldsmith fifty "guineas, to be paid him on the abridgment and delivery of the copy: as witness "our hands. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. THOMAS DAVIES."

“Bath to dissipate what he had thus fraudulently obtained.”\* It has been seen that Cadell had nothing to do with the matter; and it may be presumed that the goodnatured lady’s other facts rest on as slender a foundation.†

1769.  
Æt. 41.

On her authority, if it be received at all, must also be received another anecdote which is meant for a companion-piece to the sketch of dissipation just given. On one of his country excursions in that kind of company, the lady tells us, Goldsmith happened to stop at an inn on the road, where he found an old portrait hanging up in the parlour, which seemed to him so admirably painted that he suspected it at once to be a Vandyke, and resolved to become possessed of it if he could. He summoned the mistress of the house, asked her if she set any value on that old-fashioned picture, and, finding that she was wholly a stranger to its worth, told her it bore really such a great resemblance to his dear aunt Salisbury (picking up on the instant Mrs. Thrale’s maiden name), that if she would sell it cheap he would buy it. A bargain was struck, a price infinitely below the value was paid, Goldsmith carried away the picture with him, and, adds the amiable relater of the story (who alleges for it, I should remark, the authority of Mr. Langton), “had the satisfaction to find that “by this scandalous trick he had indeed procured a genuine and “-very saleable painting of Vandyke’s.”‡ It is hardly worth while to remark, of the incident thus narrated, that, even if its main facts were true (which, if we are to believe Northcote’s evidence as to Goldsmith’s ignorance of painting, backed by his own in the dedication of the *Deserted Village*, they could hardly have been), it takes its character and colour from the narrator; and that if the mere purchase of a picture at a price greatly below its worth must be held to involve a scandalous trick, for as to the romance about aunt Salisbury it is not credible for a moment, a very long list indeed of extremely scandalous tricksters might be named, from

\* *Memoirs*, i. 296.

† Cadell became subsequently the owner of a part of this copyright, as the assignee of Davies; but the fact does not vitiate the argument in the text.

‡ *Memoirs*, i. 295.

Swift \* upwards and downwards, on whom much hitherto hoarded indignation should straightway be poured. It is to be feared, therefore, that the dissipation-piece is on the whole to be regarded as the more characteristic of the two.

1769.

Æt. 41.

Indeed, it would be idle to deny the charge of dissipation altogether. It is clear that with the present year he passed into habits of needless expense; † used the influence of a popularity which was never higher than now, to obtain means for their thoughtless indulgence; and involved himself in the responsibilities which at last overwhelmed him. He exchanged his simple habits, says Cooke, for those of the great; he commenced quite a man of lettered ease and consequence; he was obliged to run into debt; “and his debts rendered him at times so melancholy and dejected, that I am sure he felt himself a very unhappy man.” ‡ One of these

\* “I was to-day at an auction of pictures with Pratt, and laid out two pounds five shillings for a picture of Titian, and if it were a Titian it would be worth twice as many pounds. (!) If I am cheated, I’ll part with it to Lord Masham; if it be a bargain, I’ll keep it to myself. That’s my conscience.” *Journal to Stella, Works*, iii. 126.

† There are no years when, according to Reynolds’s engagement-books, his dinners with Goldsmith were so frequent as in this and the following. “The Hornecks, Dr. Goldsmith, and Wilkes *very often*,” is the remark of his biographer (i. 326), who adds (363), “He seems at this time to have dined oftener with Goldsmith than with any one else,” and says in a later passage (381), “A very frequently recurring employment of Sir Joshua’s Monday evenings, about this time (1770-1), is a dinner at four, often with Goldsmith; then the Academy lecture at half-past 5, followed by a council-meeting at 7, and after that an adjournment to the Club.” I will add what is said by Reynolds’s biographer, with quotation from another of his note-books, in illustration of my mention, at the close of this biography, of the outcast girls whom Goldsmith befriended. “I believe Reynolds to have been the confidant of some at least of those sorrowful cases, and to have helped to relieve them. So at least I explain the first entry on a fly-leaf of the pocket-book for 1771, which runs: ‘Goldsmith’s girl; Mrs. Quarrington; inquire for Mrs. Jones at Mrs. Sneyd’s, Tibbald’s-row, Red Lion-street. Mrs. Hartley, Little James-street, Haymarket, at Mr. Kelly’s.’ These are all models. One of Goldsmith’s outcast protégées had, I imagine, been employed as a model on his recommendation.” *Life*, ii. 71.

‡ Yet the old habits remained. “I have heard Sir Joshua remark of him, in times of his greatest distress, he was often obliged to supplicate a friend for the loan of ten pounds for his immediate relief; yet if by accident a distressed petitioner told him a piteous tale, nay, if a subscription for any folly was proposed to him, he, without any thought of his own poverty, would, with an air of generosity, freely bestow on the person who solicited for it, the very loan he had himself but just before obtained.” Northcote’s *Life of Reynolds*, i. 288.



sad involvements occurred in the autumn; when, it is supposed, being pressed for some portion of the loan expended on his chambers, he exacted from Griffin an advance of five hundred <sup>1769.</sup> guineas for the first five volumes of the *Natural History*, <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> which the bookseller was obliged to make up by disposing of half a share to another bookseller (Mr. Nourse), and which Goldsmith had wholly expended before half-a-dozen chapters were written. For he had laid the subject aside to go on with his *English History*; though not unwarned of the unpopularity the latter might involve him in, so mad was the excitement of the time. Would he be a Hume or a Mrs. Macauley? He would be neither, he said; he objected equally to both.

Against Party it is certain that Goldsmith always set himself. "I fly from petty tyrants to the throne." He has, at the same time, been careful to tell us that he did this upon principle, and not from "empty notions of divine or hereditary right." In the preface to his *History*, where that expression occurs, he takes occasion to object to the opinions put forth by Hume respecting government as "sometimes reprehensible," and to declare, for his own part, that when at any time he had felt a leaning towards monarchy, it had been suggested by the consideration that a King, being but one man, may easily be restrained from doing wrong, whereas, if a number of the great are permitted to divide authority, who can punish them if they abuse it? An error is involved in this reasoning not inexcusable, I hope, by those who have read the sketches of party given in this narrative; but at least it suffices to show us why, on the particular theme, Goldsmith joined Johnson against Burke, though he differed from Johnson in this, that in real truth he went with neither faction.

Yet surely, if ever even faction, as against itself, could be invested with a something manly and defensible, it was now. The most thoughtful, the most retired, the least excitable of men, were suddenly aroused to some interest in it. A friend of Gray relates that he had an appointment to meet the poet at his lodgings in Jermyn-street, and found him so deeply plunged in the columns

of a newspaper, which with his dinner had been sent him from a neighbouring tavern, that his attention was with difficulty drawn from it. "Take this," said he, in a tone of excitement; "here  
 "is such writing as I never before saw in a newspaper."\* 1769.  
Æt. 41.  
 It was the first letter with the signature of "Junius." But it was not what now we must associate with Junius; not the reckless calumnies and scandals, not the personal spite and hatreds; not such halting liberalism as his approval of the taxation of America, and his protest against the disfranchisement of Old Sarum; which then so completely seized upon the reason as well as the tempers of men. It was the startling manifestation of power and courage; it was the sense that unscrupulous ministers had now an enemy as unscrupulous; that here was knowledge of even the worst chicaneries of office, which not the most sneering official could make light of; that no minister in either House, no courtier at St. James's, no obsequious judge at Westminster, no supercilious secretary in any of the departments, could hereafter feel *himself* safe from treachery and betrayal; and that what hitherto had been only a vulgar half-articulate cry from the Brentford hustings, or at best a faint whisper imperfectly echoed from St. Stephen's, was now made the property and enjoyment of every section of the people,—of the educated by its exquisite polish, of the vulgar by its relish of malice, of the great middle-class by its animated plainness, vigorous shrewdness, and dogged perseverance. "I  
 "will be heard," cried Burke in the House of Commons, in the course of what he wittily called the fifth act of the tragi-comedy acted by his majesty's servants for the benefit of Mr. Wilkes, at the expense of the constitution: "I *will* be heard. I will throw  
 "open those doors, and tell the people of England that when a  
 "man is addressing the chair on their behalf, the attention of the  
 "Speaker is engaged"—But "great noise" of members talking proved too much for even that impetuous spirit; he was *not* heard;

\* This account is from Sir Egerton Brydges. Mr. Nicholls merely says: "One day when I entered his apartment, I found him absorbed in reading the newspaper. This was the first letter which appeared of *Junius*." *Works*, v. 51.

nor, until the publication of Sir Henry Cavendish's *Notes* a dozen years since,\* had the English people any detailed means of knowing what had passed during the most exciting debates ever known within their House. But the gap was filled by Junius.  
 1769.  
 Et. 41. By those celebrated letters, reprinted and circulated in every possible shape, the people were made parties, in its progress, to much of what was doing in St. Stephen's; in the House itself, the popular element was made of greater practical importance; the democratic spirit throughout the country was strengthened; and, above all, the right of the newspapers to report the debates was at last secured.

\* Sir Henry Cavendish was member for Lostwithiel through the whole of the Parliament which met in May 1768, and was dissolved in June 1774, while these matters were debated. So strictly, however, was the standing order against strangers enforced during its continuance, or rather, so severely were all persons punished who ventured to make public any speeches of the members, that, with the exception of one or two by Burke and George Grenville published by themselves, not one of the many famous efforts of the orators of the time, or indeed anything but the scantiest outline of the actual proceedings of the House, has illustrated our parliamentary histories. Nevertheless it was known that Sir Henry Cavendish (like Sir Simonds d'Ewes in a former and yet more exciting Parliament) had taken private notes, and the publication of these we owe to the energy of the late Mr. Wright, by whom, after fifteen years' search, they were found among the Egerton MSS. of the British Museum. They filled forty-nine small quarto volumes; contained ample notes of all the debates during the six sessions of the Parliament in question (excepting only a portion of the winter session of 1770); had been corrected and re-written, in a great many places, by Sir Henry Cavendish himself; and in some, continued still in shorthand. Mr. Wright immediately began their publication, continued it with but moderate patronage (I fear) until two large volumes had been nearly completed, leaving the debates of the last three years a blank; and then died. More than two-thirds of these most valuable notes remain unpublished. Will no private or public society undertake to complete them? Might they not by this time be considered sufficiently to belong to our national history to justify their publication, even by an order of the House of Commons itself? Its cost would be something less than of one reasonably sized blue book, and would the good sense and liberality of such a vote be quite without precedent? 1852. No answer has been made to this appeal. 1870.

## CHAPTER V.

### LONDON LIFE.

1769—1770.

HORACE WALPOLE, hopeless of his cousin Conway for a Premier, had left politics now; but he could see those increasing intimations of an uneasy democratic spirit at which I have glanced at the close of the last chapter, and he saw them with <sup>1769.</sup>  
alarm. To meet this year at the same dinner-table the Duc <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> de Rochefoucault and Mrs. Macauley,\* whose statue the rector of St. Stephen's Walbrook had just set up in the chancel of his church, was, to poor Horace, significant of evil.† Yet when he went to Paris a month or two later, and could not get into the Louvre for the crowds that were flocking to see Madame Dubarry's portrait at the *Exposition*, he did not seem to see evil impending there. He could only wonder that the French should adore the monarch that was starving them;‡ and when the Revolution *did* come, was ready to tear his periwig with horror. With all his professions for liberty, indeed, he never measured liberty downwards. He never thought of the independence of those below him, though half his life was passed in crying out for freedom

\* "She is one of the sights," adds Walpole, "that all foreigners are carried to see." *Letters to Mann*, ii. 25.

† "I choose to be unpopular, lest I should be chosen alderman for some ward or other, and there is one just now vacant. I hope they will elect Mrs. Macauley." Walpole to Countess Ossory, Dec. 5, 1769. *Ossory Letters* (published at the close of 1848, by Mr. Vernon Smith), i. 5.

‡ *Coll. Lett.* v. 268.



from those above him. Unhappily, also, little things and great things too often affected him, or escaped him, in exactly the same proportion, to the sad misuse of his brilliant talents; and it was with this Gray pleasantly reproached him, when, after <sup>1769.</sup> <sub>Æt. 41.</sub> quiet sarcastic enjoyment of the Paris moralities, he blazed up with so much heat against poor Garrick's Stratford Jubilee. Why so tolerant of Dubarrydom, and so wrathful at Vanity Fair?\*

The great actors at the Jubilee in Shakespeare's honour made a three-days' wonder of it (the 6th, 7th, and 8th of September), and then came back to town. Neither Johnson nor Goldsmith had joined them: but among them were Colman, representing his theatre, in place of poor Powell, who had died suddenly at Bristol two months before; Foote, laughing at everything going forward; several of Garrick's noble friends, dukes, earls, and aristocratic beauties; and last, not least, Mr. Boswell "in a Corsican habit,

\* Such was the name Gray gave to the Jubilee; but one of Garrick's Cambridge correspondents (Mr. J. Sharp), who reports this, is at the same time careful to tell the sensitive manager (*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 349) that "he spoke handsomely "of your happy knack at epilogues." In this, let me add, agreeing with Johnson, who went so far as to say that, although of course Dryden had written single prologues and epilogues finer than any of Garrick's, he had not written such a great number on the same level of merit as clever little Davy had managed to write. An ode, however, is not exactly an epilogue, as Garrick found perhaps too late while he was perpetrating his ode for the Jubilee. Connected with it is one of the pleasantest of the anecdotes of Gray, told to Mr. Rogers by "the little Fitzherbert" of whom the poet speaks so kindly (*Correspondence of Gray and Mason*, 443), and who became afterwards Lord St. Helens. "I came to St. John's College, Cambridge," he said to Mr. Rogers, who repeated the anecdote to Mr. Mitford, "in 1770, and that year "received a visit from Gray, having a letter of introduction to him. He was accompanied by Dr. Glsborne, Mr. Stenhewer, and Mr. Palgrave, and they walked one "after one, in Indian file. When they withdrew, every college man took off his cap "as he passed, a considerable number having assembled in the quadrangle to see Mr. "Gray, who was seldom seen. I asked Mr. Gray, to the great dismay of his companions, what he thought of Mr. Garrick's Jubilee Ode, just published? He "answered, 'He was easily pleased.'" *Works*, v. 183. This at any rate was better morality than Bishop Warburton's, who, at the very time when he was most intimate with Garrick, and in his correspondence overflowing with compliment, thus wrote to Hurd on the 23rd of September, 1769 (*Letters*, 439): "Garrick's portentous Ode, as "you truly call it, has but one line of truth in it, which is where he calls Shakespeare "the God of our Idolatry: for sense I will not allow it; for that which is so highly "satirical, he makes the topic of his hero's encomium. The Ode itself is below any "of Cibber's. Cibber's nonsense was something like sense; but this man's sense, "whenever he deviates into it, is much more like nonsense."

“with pistols in his belt, and a musket at his back, and in the front  
 “of his cap, in gold letters, these words, PAOLI AND LIBERTY.” \*  
 He had written a poem for recitation at the masquerade,  
 to which the crowd refused to listen; but he brought it up <sup>1769.</sup>  
 to London, fired it off in the newspapers, and had the <sub>Æt. 41.</sub>  
 singular satisfaction of presenting it in person to Paoli himself,  
 who arrived in London not many days after, and with a note from  
 whom Bozzy had already, as we have seen, forced his way, Cor-  
 sican dress and all, into the presence of the great Mr. Pitt. The  
 patriot's struggle having ended in the defeat and absorption of  
 Corsica, he was content to subside into a civil dangler at St.  
 James's with a pension of a thousand a year; † and probably  
 laughed as heartily as anybody, when Boswell now appeared in a  
 full suit of black, with “Corsica” exposed in legible letters on his  
 hat, as the dear defunct he was in mourning for. Nor did the fit  
 abate for some time. It was not until several months later that the  
 old laird of Affleck (so was Auchinleck in those days familiarly  
 called) had occasion to make his famous complaint to a friend.  
 “There's nae hope for Jamie, mon. Jamie is gaen clean gyte.  
 “What do you think, mon? He's done wi' Paoli; he's off wi'  
 “the landlouping scoundrel of a Corsican; and whose tail do you

\* See also Davies's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 226-7.

† *Letters to Mann*, ii. 52, 53. “The court artfully adopts him, and thus crushes  
 “one egg on which Faction, and her brood hen, Mrs. Macauley, would have been very  
 “glad to have sat.” In another letter he is still more amusing and detailed. “The  
 “opposition were ready to receive and incorporate him in the list of popular tribunes.  
 “The court artfully intercepted the project; and deeming patriots of all nations  
 “equally corruptible, bestowed a pension of 1000*l.* a year on the unheroic fugitive.  
 “Themistocles accepted the gold of Xerxes, and excused himself from receiving a  
 “visit from Mrs. Macauley, who had given him printed advice for settling a republic.  
 “I saw him soon after his arrival, dangling at court. He was a man of decent  
 “deportment, vacant of all melancholy reflection, with as much ease as suited a  
 “prudence that seemed the utmost effort of a wary understanding, and so void of  
 “anything remarkable in his aspect, that, being asked if I knew who it was, I judged  
 “him a Scottish officer (for he was sandy complexioned and in regimentals) who  
 “was cautiously awaiting the moment of promotion. All his heroism consisted in bear-  
 “ing with composure the accounts of his friends being tortured and butchered,  
 “while he was sunk into a pensioner of that very court that had proclaimed his  
 “valiant countrymen and associates rebels.” *Letters to Mann*, iii. 386. Not the  
 least remarkable thing about Paoli was that he afterwards became godfather to the  
 son of the Corsican lawyer who became Emperor of France.

"think he has pinn'd himself to now, mon?" And hero the old judge paused, to summon up a sneer of most sovereign contempt.

"A *dominie*, mon; an auld dominie: he keeped a schùle,

1709. "and cau'd it an acaadamy."\* But, though not yet exclu-

Æt. 41. sively pinned to the auld dominie's tail, Jamie so far abated

his ostentatious attendance on the landlouping Corsican as to revive some of the old nights at the Mitre, and to get up some dinners and drinking parties at his rooms in Old Bond-street. One of the dinners was fixed for the 16th of October; and the party invited were Johnson, Reynolds (now knighted as the President of the Royal Academy), Goldsmith, Garrick, Murphy, Bickerstaff, and Tom Davies.

Some days before it took place, however, an incident occurred of no small interest to that circle. One of Johnson's early acquaintance was the Italian Baretti, a man of cynical temper and overbearing manners,† but also of undoubted ability, who had been useful to him at the time of the *Dictionary*, and whose services had never been forgotten. To Goldsmith, on the other hand, this man had made himself peculiarly hateful by all that malice in little, which, on a larger field, he subsequently practised against poor Mrs. Piozzi; and they seem never to have met but to quarrel. Their mutual dislike is described by Tom Davies. "He (Goldsmith) least "of all mankind, approved Baretti's conversation; he considered "him as an insolent, overbearing foreigner: as Baretti, in his "turn, thought him an unpolished man, and an absurd companion."‡ But it now unhappily fell out that in a street scuffle Baretti drew out a fruit knife which he always carried, and killed a man (one of three who had grossly insulted him, on his somewhat rudely repulsing the overtures of a woman with whom

\* Note to *Boswell*, v. 131.

† Johnson thus writes to Mrs. Thrale of "the tyranny of B——i." "Poor B——i! "do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only "to be frank and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To "be frank he thinks is to be cynical, and to be independent is to be rude. Forgive "him, dearest lady, the rather because of his misbehaviours I am afraid he learned "part of me." 15th July, 1775. *Piozzi Letters*, i. 277.

‡ *Life of Garrick*, ii. 169.



they were proved to be connected);\* and it further happened that Goldsmith was among the first to hear of the incident next morning, while Baretti was under examination before Sir John Fielding. The goodnatured man forgot all his wrongs in an <sup>1769.</sup> instant, thought only of his enemy's evil plight, and hurried <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> off to render him assistance. "When this unhappy Italian," says Davies, "was charged with murder, and sent by Sir John Fielding "to Newgate, Goldsmith opened his purse, and would have given "him every shilling it contained: he at the same time insisted "upon going in the coach with him to the place of his confinement."† Bail was given before Lord Mansfield a few days later; and never were such names, before or since, proffered in connection with such a charge. They were Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Burke, and Garrick. All the friends met to arrange the defence; and it was at one of the consultations, on a hot dispute arising between Burke and Johnson, that the latter is reported to have frankly admitted afterwards, "Burke and I should have been "of one opinion if we had had no audience."‡ Baretti was acquitted, though not without merited rebuke; and Johnson subsequently obtained for him the post of tutor in the family of the Thrales (which Mrs. Thrale lived to have reason bitterly to repent), and Reynolds that of honorary foreign secretary to the new Academy.

But Mr. Boswell's dinner is waiting us. On that very day, as Mr. William Filby's bills enable us with commendable correctness to state, Goldsmith's tailor took him home "a half-dress suit of rat-teen lined with satin, a pair of silk stocking breeches, and a pair "of bloom-coloured ditto" (for which the entire charge was about sixteen pounds); and to Old Bond-street the poet would seem to

\* See *Boswell*, iii. 98-9, and note.

† *Life of Garrick*, ii. 169-170.

‡ Boswell tells this on the authority of George Steevens (viii. 326), but it is surely doubtful if in a matter of life and death the passion of talking for victory could have displayed itself in a man naturally so humane; and it is to be added that George Steevens is not in any matter a very reliable authority. Baretti's witnesses to "the "quietness of his general character" were Beauclerc, Reynolds, Jolinson, Fitzherbert, Burke, Garrick, Goldsmith, and Dr. Hallifax.



have proceeded in "silk attire."\* Though he is said to have been last at every dinner party (arriving always, according to Sir George

Beaumont, in a violent bustle just as the rest were sitting down), when he arrived on this occasion there was still a <sup>1769.</sup>  
Æt. 41. laggard : but Garrick and Johnson were come, and Boswell

pleasantly relates with what good-humour they had met; how Garrick played round Johnson with a fond vivacity, taking hold of the breasts of his coat, and, as he looked up in his face with a lively archness, complimenting him on the good health which he seemed then to enjoy, while the sage, shaking his head, beheld him with a gentle complacency. Dinner continued to be kept waiting however, Reynolds not yet arriving;† and, says Boswell, "Goldsmith, to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, *for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions.*" Of course Boswell had no such

\* I here give, from Mr. Filby's Ledger (*Prior*, ii. 232-3), Goldsmith's sartorial account for 1769 and 1770.

1769.			
Jan. 6.	To calico waistcoats . . . . .	£0	7 0
Feb. 9.	To suit of clothes . . . . .	8	14 8
11.	To altering two pair of breeches for man . . . . .	0	2 0
17.	To mending ditto . . . . .	0	1 6
Sept. 19.	To pair of silk breeches . . . . .	2	3 0
24.	To making frock suit of cloth . . . . .	6	3 9
Oct. 16.	To making a half-dress suit of ratteen, lined with satin . . . . .	12	12 0
	To a pair of silk stocking breeches . . . . .	2	5 0
	To a pair of bloom-coloured ditto . . . . .	1	4 6

1770.			
April 21.	To Bath coating surtout . . . . .	1	10 0
	To dress suit . . . . .	9	19 3
May 3.	To suit . . . . .	5	17 7½
July 4.	To suit . . . . .	7	13 9
Sept. 8.	To suit of mourning . . . . .	5	12 0

£64 6 0½

(Paid 40*l.* February 8, 1771, by a note of hand on Mr. Thos. Davies; and 23*l.* Oct. 2nd, by part of a note of hand on Griffin.)

† "I proposed, as usual upon such occasions, to order dinner to be served; adding, 'ought six people be kept waiting for one?' 'Why, yes,' answered Johnson, with a delicate humanity, 'if the one will suffer more by your sitting down than the six will do by waiting.'" *Boswell*, iii. 83.

weakness, any more than Horace Walpole, also a great laugh on the same score. Though the one had so lately figured in Corsican costume, and was so proud of his ordinary dress that he would show off to the smallest of printers' devils his new ruffles and sword; though the other had just received a party of French visitors at Strawberry-hill in elaborate state, presenting himself at the gate in a "cravat of Gibbons's carving" and a pair of James-the-First gloves embroidered up to the elbows; both believed themselves entitled to make the most of poor Goldsmith's "brag-

1769.  
Æt. 41.



"ging:" and Garrick, however good the humour he might be in, had always his laugh in equal readiness. "Come, come," he said, "talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worst . . . eh, eh!" Goldsmith eagerly attempted to interrupt him. "Nay," continued Garrick, laughing ironically, "nay, you will always *look* like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or ill *drest*." "Well," answered Goldsmith, with an amusing simplicity which makes the anecdote very pleasant to us, "let me tell you, when my tailor brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he said, 'Sir, I have a favour to beg of you. When any body asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby, at the

“ ‘ Harrow in Water-lane.’ ” “ Why, sir,” remarked Johnson, “ that  
 “ was because he knew the strange colour would attract crowds to  
 “ gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how  
 1769.  
 22. 41. “ well he could make a coat, even of so absurd a colour.”  
 Crowds have been attracted to gaze at it, and Mr. Filby's  
 bloom-coloured coat defies the ravages of time !

How the party talked after dinner may be read in Boswell ; in all whose reports, however, the confessed object is to give merely the talk of one speaker, with only such limited fragments of remark from others as may be necessary in elucidation of the one. Thus, there are but two sentences preserved of Goldsmith's ; both sensible enough, though both of them indicating that he was not disposed to accept all Johnson's criticism for gospel. He put in a word for Pope's character of Addison, as “ showing a deep knowledge of the human heart,” while Johnson was declaring (quite justly) that in Dryden's poetry were passages drawn from a profundity which Pope could never reach ; and he quietly interposed, when Johnson took to praising Lord Kames's *Elements of Criticism*, that it must have been easier to write that book “ than it was to read it.” Yet a very interesting dinner to have been present at, one feels that on the whole this must have been. Goldsmith's new coat one would like to have seen, with the first freshness of its bloom upon it. Something it must have been to hear Johnson recite, “ in his forcible melodious manner,” those magnificent closing lines of the *Dunciad* which Pope himself could not repeat without a voice that faltered with emotion. Nor could the eager encounter of Garrick with Johnson on the respective merits of Shakespeare and Congreve fail to have had its entertainment for us ;\* and, before and beyond all, who would not have laughed

\* “ Johnson said that the description of the Temple, in *The Mourning Bride*, “ was the finest poetical passage he had ever read : he recollected none in Shakespeare equal to it. ‘ But,’ said Garrick, all alarmed for the God of his idolatry, ‘ we “ know not the extent and variety of his powers. We are to suppose there are “ such passages in his works. Shakespeare must not suffer from the badness of our “ ‘ memories.’ Johnson, diverted by this enthusiastic jealousy, went on with great “ ardour : ‘ No, sir ; Congreve has nature’ (smiling on the tragic eagerness of “ Garrick) ; but composing himself, he added, ‘ Sir, this is not comparing Congreve

to see the very giver as well as describer of the feast plucking up courage at it to "venture" a remark, and bluntly called a dunce for his pains! Poor Boswell appears to have been the only one who came off ill at the dinner, as he did at several other meetings <sup>1769.</sup> before he returned to Scotland; being compared to Pope's <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> dunces,\* having his head called his peccant part, and receiving other as unequivocal compliments; so that he was fain to console himself with what he now heard Goldsmith, happily adapting an expression in one of Cibber's comedies, say of his hero's conversation: "There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol "misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it." †

"on the whole with Shakespeare on the whole; but only maintaining that Congreve "has one finer passage than any that can be found in Shakespeare. Sir, a man may "have no more than ten guineas in the world, but he may have those ten guineas "in one piece; and so may have a finer piece than a man who has ten thousand "pound: but then he has only one ten-guinea piece." Boswell, iii. 87. If Johnson really believed what he said of Congreve, there is no more to be added than that his own mind could not reach to a finer passage, and did not know it when it lay before him. But, notwithstanding that Congreve's lines really *do* make an appeal to that superstitious side of Johnson's nature which gave always so ready a response, it is also very evident that he was fond of this kind of paradoxical teasing of Garrick. "He told me," says Mrs. Thrale, "how he used to tease Garrick by commendations of "the Tomb scene in Congreve's *Mourning Bride*" (evidently the same thing quoted at Boswell's dinner-table), "protesting that Shakespeare had, in the same line of "excellence, nothing so good; 'All which is strictly true,' said he" (a pity he did!) "but that is no reason for supposing Congreve is to stand in competition with "Shakespeare; these fellows know not how to blame, nor how to commend." *Anecdotes*, 58.

\* While Johnson was talking loudly in praise of the closing lines of the *Dunciad*, one of the company ventured to say (so Boswell tenderly introduces a remark from himself, the host and entertainer), "Too fine for such a poem:—a poem on what?" JOHNSON (with a disdainful look), "Why, on Dunces. It was worth while being a "dunce then. Ah, sir, hadst thou lived in those days! It is not worth while being "a dunce now, when there are no wits." Northcote, in his *Life of Reynolds* (ii. 189), has mistold this same incident, evidently taking it out of Boswell's book; and yet, as I have elsewhere frequent occasion to remark, the copyist gets himself quoted afterwards to corroborate or invalidate the only real authority. See Croker's *Boswell*, 203, note 6.

† Boswell, iii. 104. Cooke reports another saying of Goldsmith's to the same effect. "There's no chance for you in arguing with Johnson. Like the Tartar "horse, if he does not conquer you in front, his kick from behind is sure to be "fatal." Cooke adds that Goldsmith never had any scruple in venting his pleasantries before Johnson, with whom he might say and do many things *cum privilegio*; for, says Cooke very truly, Dr. Johnson knew Goldsmith early and whilst he was struggling with his poverty, and always thought as respectfully of his heart as of his talents.



The nature of Goldsmith's employments at the close of 1769 is indicated in the advertising columns of the papers of the day.

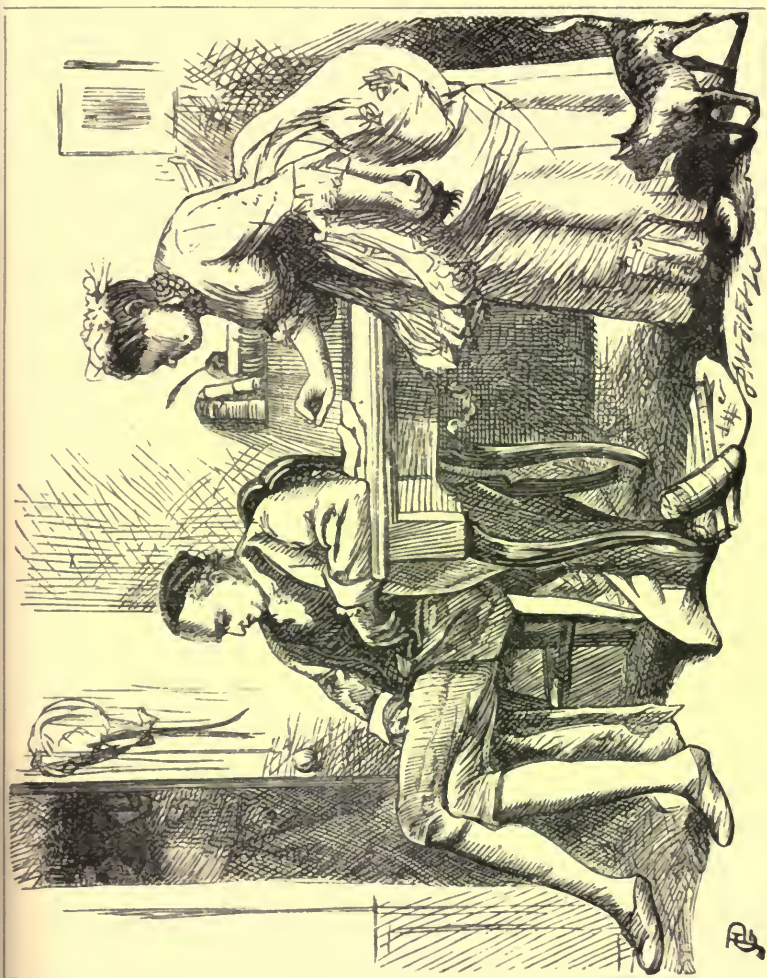
His *English History* occupied him chiefly, his *History of*  
1769. *Animated Nature* occasionally; he had undertaken to write a  
Æt. 41. life of his countryman, Parnell, for a new edition of his poems (this being a subject in which, as he remarks in the biography itself, what he remembered having collected in boyhood "from my father "and uncle, who knew him," had doubtless given him a personal interest); and the speedy publication of the *Deserted Village* was twice announced in the *Public Advertiser*. But it was not published speedily. Still it was paused over, altered, polished, and refined. Bishop Percy has mentioned\* the delightful facility with which his prose flowed forth unblotted with erasure, as a contrast to the labour and pains of his verse interlined with countless alterations; but in prose as in poetry he aimed at the like effects, and obtained them. He knew that no picture will stand, if the colours are bad, ill-chosen, or indiscreetly combined; and that not chaos, but order, is creation. It is a pity that men, though of perhaps greater genius, who have lived since his time, should not more carefully have pondered such lessons as his writings bequeath to us. It is a pity that the disposition to rush into print should be so general; for few men have ever repented of publishing too late. Goldsmith, alas! never found himself without the excuse which the successful poet, supreme in his power and mastery over the town, threw out for the instant needs and pressing necessities of less fortunate men.

"Keep your piece nine years."

"Nine years!" cries he, who, high in Drury-lane,  
 Lull'd by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,  
 Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,  
 Obligated by hunger and request of friends.†

\* *Memoir*, 113. "His elegant and enchanting style in prose flowed from him "with such facility, that in whole quires of his *Histories*, *Animated Nature*, &c. "he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word; but in his verses, "especially his two great ethic poems, nothing could exceed the patient and incessant revision which he bestowed upon them. To save himself the trouble of "transcription, he wrote the lines in his first copy very wide, and would so fill up "the intermediate space with reiterated corrections, that scarcely a word of his first "effusions was left unaltered."

† *Prolog. to Satires*, 40-41.



GOLDSMITH AND HIS LANDLADY.



Yet neither at the request of friends, nor at the more urgent call of hunger, did Goldsmith peril his chances of being cherished as a poet by future generations. Pope's own method of sending forth a part of a poem one winter and promising its comple-<sup>1769.</sup>  
tion for the winter following, which Mr. Rogers has often <sup>Æt. 41.</sup> enlarged upon to me as the only true method, would be laughed at nowadays: yet extremely few are the thoughts "conceived with "rapture and with fire begot," compared with those that may be carefully brought forth, becomingly and charmingly habited, and introduced by the Graces. Men of the more brilliant order of fancy and imagination should be always distrustful of their powers. Spar and stalactite are bad materials for the foundation of solid edifices.

The year 1770 opens with a glimpse into the old fireside at Kilmore. The Lawders do not seem to have communicated<sup>1770.</sup>  
with him since his uncle Contarine's death; and a legacy of <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> £15, left him by that generous friend, remained unappropriated in their hands. His brother Maurice, still without calling or employment, and apparently living on such of his relatives as from time to time were willing to afford him a home, probably heard this legacy mentioned while he made one of his self-supporting visits, for he straightway wrote to Oliver. The money would help him to an outfit, if his famous brother could help him to an appointment; and to express his earnest hopes in this direction, was the drift of the letter. His sister Johnson wrote soon after, for her husband, in a precisely similar strain; and to these letters Goldsmith's reply has been kept. It shows little change since earlier days. His Irish friends and family are as they then were. They do not seem to have answered many recent communications sent to them; he now learns for the first time that Charles is no longer in Ireland; his brother-in-law, Hodson, has been as silent as the rest; his sister Hodson he never mentions, some early disagreement remaining still unsettled; and he sends cousin Jenny his portrait, in memory of an original "almost forgot." The letter is directed to "Mr. Maurice Goldsmith, at James Lawder's, Esq, at Kilmore, "near Carrick-on-Shannon," and bears the date of "January 1770."



"DEAR BROTHER, I should have answered your letter sooner, but in truth I am not fond of thinking of the necessities of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are still every way unprovided for; and

1770. what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister  
Æt. 42. Johnson,\* by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have until I can serve you, him, and myself more effectually. As yet no opportunity has offered, but I believe you are pretty well convinced that I will not be remiss when it arrives. The king has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution than any benefit to myself. Honours to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt.† You tell me that there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore, how to dispose of money, which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness, give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it: whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our poor shattered family demands our sincerest gratitude, and though they have almost forgot me, yet, if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return, and encrease their good humour by adding to my own. I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkenor's, folded in a letter. The face, you well know, is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. I believe I have written an hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer from any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them. If then you have a mind to oblige me, you will write often whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson, and his son; my brother Harry's son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother, I don't understand you—Where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally filled with news of this kind, would make me very happy,

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\* The "Jenny" of a former letter; see *ante*, i. 165.

† He uses the same comparison in one of his essays, and again introduces it in the *Haunch of Venison*. Yet it belongs to Tom Brown, who in his *Laconics* (pointed out to me by Mr. Peter Cunningham) says that "to treat a poor wretch with a bottle of Burgundy, or fill his snuff-box, is like giving a pair of lace ruffles to a man that has never a shirt on his back. Put something into his pocket." *Works*, Ed. 1700, iv. 14.

and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be yours, most affectionately, OLIVER GOLDSMITH.\*

The writer's weakness is here, too, as of old. He believes <sup>1770.</sup> *he could get*, for his poor, idle, thriftless petitioners, exactly <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> what they want; though ruffles, minus the shirt, are the sum of his own acquisitions. But he will wait; and they must wait; and good things are sure to arrive; and they will one day be all in good-humour again. The old, hopeful, sanguine, unreflecting story! Nevertheless Maurice soon tired of waiting, as his wealthier relatives tired of helping him to wait; and he is shortly afterwards discovered again complaining to his brother, that really he finds it difficult to live like a gentleman. Oliver replies upon this in somewhat plainer fashion; recommending him by all means to quit the unprofitable calling, and betake himself to some handicraft employment, if no better can be found: whereupon Maurice bound himself to a cabinet-maker in Drumsna in the county of Leitrim, in which calling, several years after his brother's death, he kept a shop in Dublin. Meanwhile Oliver's inquiry after brother-in-law Hodson's son had the effect, soon after his letter reached Athlone, of bringing back to London a very unsettled and somewhat eccentric youth: who had formerly visited Goldsmith, after abruptly quitting Dublin University, leaving at that time obscure traces of the extent to which his celebrated relative had befriended him; and who now, having occupied the interval chiefly in foreign travel during which he had turned to account certain half-finished medical studies, lived for the most part in London, until his uncle Oliver's death, as a pensioner on his scanty resources. He resembled Oliver in some thoughtless peculiarities of character, and in his odd vicissitudes of good and evil fortune, for he once paid a small debt with an undrawn lottery ticket which turned out a prize of £20,000. During his residence in London, he practised occasionally, without any regular qualification, as an apothecary in Newman-street; but he ultimately

\* *Percy Memoir*, 86-89. To the original is annexed a receipt which shows that the sum of 15*l.* was paid to Maurice Goldsmith for a legacy bequeathed to Oliver Goldsmith by the late Rev. Thomas Contarine. Dated 4th Feb. 1770.

ended his days as a prosperous Irish gentleman, farming a patrimonial estate.\* When Goldsmith died, half the unpaid bill he owed to Mr. William Filby, and which amounted in all to only £79, was for clothes supplied to this nephew Hodson. Yet it does not appear that the bill was paid by this very genuine young branch of the old, careless, idle, improvident Goldsmith stock.†

\* His son, Oliver Goldsmith Hodson, when Dr. Annesley Streat was writing to Mr. Mangin from Athlone at the close of 1807, had inherited and was living "on an estate of about 700*l.* a year, eight miles from this town." Mangin's *Essay*, 148. I have to add that one of the descendants of these connections of Goldsmith, who has resumed the original spelling of the name, is my solicitor and valued friend, Mr. G. F. Hudson of Bucklersbury, in whose genial literary tastes, enjoyment of doing good, and a turn for humorous observation applied to the kindest use, the good-hearted poet himself might have acknowledged no unworthy kinsman.

† I here give, from Mr. Filby's ledger, that account with the worthy citizen during the last three years of Goldsmith's life which was the last ever delivered to him. The balance will be given hereafter, as it stood at the period of his death.

1771.

Jan.	3.	To clothes' scouring and mending and pressing	£0 4 6
	3.	To pair of best silk stocking breeches	2 5 6
	24.	To suit of clothes, lined with silk, gold buttons, &c.	9 17 6
Feb.	8.	To best silk breeches	2 5 6
April	11.	To frock suit, lined with ( <i>illegible</i> ) half trimmed with gold sprig buttons	8 13 5
	17.	To Queen's blue-dress suit	11 17 0
Oct.	3.	To suit, plain	5 13 0
Dec.	5.	To silk breeches	2 2 9
		To jobs, mending, &c.	0 5 0

1772.

Jan.	4.	To half-trimmed frock suit	5 15 0
	31.	To suit of mourning	5 12 0
March	18.	To fine ratteen surtout, in grain	3 5 6
April	28.	To Princess stuff breeches	1 7 0
May	1.	To superfine cloth ditto	1 3 0
	2.	To suit of livery	4 10 6
	5.	To ditto frock and waistcoat	2 12 6
		To jacket	1 1 0
	21.	To your blue velvet suit	21 10 9
		To crimson collar for man	0 2 6
June	8.	To altering two coats	0 3 0
	10.	To velvet suit new-coloured	1 1 0
July	18.	To mending, &c.	0 2 6
Nov.	13.	To making velvet waistcoat	1 1 0
Dec.	17.	To jobs, &c.	1 5 8

1773.

March	4.	To Princess stuff breeches	1 7 6
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Carried forward . . . £95 4 7

		Brought forward	£95	4	7
March 11.	To suit . . . . .		10	0	0
April 12.	To mending, &c. . . . .		0	1	6
May 7.	To velvet waistcoat, cleaning, &c. . . . .		0	15	9
	10. To altering suit, and for serge de soye for waistcoat and skirts, &c. . . . .		0	12	6
	13. To rich straw silk tamboured waistcoat . . . . .		4	4	0
June 2.	Tamboured waistcoat cleaned . . . . .		0	1	6
	To green half-trimmed frock and breeches, lined with silk, &c. &c. . . . .		6	0	0
	To silver grey silk tamboured waistcoat . . . . .		4	0	0
	17. To fine brown cambric waistcoat, tamboured . . . . .		2	1	6
	Mr. Hodson's bill per order . . . . .		35	3	0
	Bill delivered . . . . .		£158	4	4

(Of this, 50*l.* was paid the 5th April, and 60*l.* the 14th September, 1773, leaving a balance against Goldsmith of 48*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.*)



## CHAPTER VI.

### DINNERS AND TALK.

1770.

IN Goldsmith's letter to his brother Maurice, it will have been observed that the writer's friends over the Shannon were told shortly to expect some mezzotinto prints of himself, and <sup>1770.</sup> of such friends of his as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> Colman. The fact thus indicated has its proper biographical significance. The head of the author of the *Traveller* now figured in the print-shops. Reynolds had painted his portrait. "In poetry we may be said to have nothing new," says a letter-writer of the day ; \* "but we have the mezzotinto print of the new "poet, Doctor Goldsmith, in the print-shop windows. It is in profile from a painting of Reynolds, and resembles him greatly." The engraving was an admirable one ; having been executed, under the eye of the great painter himself, by Giuseppe Marchi, his first pupil. The original, which Reynolds intended for himself, passed into the possession of the Duke of Dorset, and remains still at Knowle ; † but a copy also painted by Reynolds, and the only other portrait of Goldsmith known to have been touched by his pencil, was taken afterwards for Thrale, and ultimately placed in the dining-room at Streatham, by the side of Johnson, Burke, Garrick, and others of his famous friends.‡ The life of his cele-

\* To Smollett.

† It has been carefully engraved for this work.

‡ Madame D'Arblay, in the *Memoirs* of her father (ii. 80-1), thus describes the Streatham Portrait Gallery. "Mrs. Thrale and her eldest daughter were in one "piece, over the fireplace, at full length. The rest of the pictures were all three-

brity is thus, as it were, beginning; and from no kinder, no worthier hand than that of Reynolds, could it receive inauguration. The great painter's restless and fidgety sister, who used herself to paint portraits with such exact imitation <sup>1770.</sup> of her brother's defects and avoidance of his beauties, that, <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> according to Northcote,\* they made himself cry and everybody else laugh, thought it marvellous that so much dignity could have been given to the poet's face and yet so strong a likeness be conveyed: for "Doctor Goldsmith's cast of countenance," she

"quarters. Mr. Thrale was over the door leading to his study. The general collection then began by Lord Sandys and Lord Westcote, two early noble friends of "Mr. Thrale. Then followed Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Murphy, "Mr. Garrick, Mr. Barette, Sir Robert Chambers, and Sir Joshua Reynolds himself. "All painted in the highest style of the great master, who much delighted in this "his Streatham Gallery. There was place left but for one more frame, when the "acquaintance with Dr. Burney began at Streatham." The whole of this gallery of portraits by Reynolds was sold by auction in May 1816. At the time when they were executed, the painter's price for portraits of that size was thirty-five guineas; the following were the prices realised at the sale fifty-four years ago. They are taken from Mrs. Piozzi's marked catalogue in *Piozziana*, 51. See also *Anecdotes*, 295.

"THE STREATHAM PORTRAITS.

LORD SANDYS . . . . .	£36 15	Lady Downshire; his heir.
LORD LYTTETTON [Lord Westcote] . . . . .	43 1	Mr. Lyttelton; his son.
MRS. PIOZZI [and her daughter] . . . . .	81 18	S. Boddington, Esq. a rich merchant.
GOLDSMITH [duplicate of the original] . . . . .	133 7	Duke of Bedford.
SIR J. REYNOLDS . . . . .	128 2	R. Sharp, Esq. M.P.
SIR R. CHAMBERS . . . . .	84 0	Lady Chambers; his widow.
DAVID GARRICK . . . . .	183 15	Dr. Charles Burney, Greenwich.
BARETTI . . . . .	31 10	Stewart, Esq. I know not who.
DR. BURNEY . . . . .	84 0	Dr. C. Burney of Greenwich, his son.
EDMUND BURKE . . . . .	252 0	R. Sharp, Esq. M.P.
DR. JOHNSON . . . . .	378 0	Watson Taylor, Esq. by whom for . .
. . MR. MURPHY, was offered . . . . .	102 18	but I bought it in."

\* *Conversations*, 167. Admirably is the old painter made to say, "It is that "which makes every one dread a mimic. Your self-love is alarmed, without "being so easily reassured. You know there is a difference, but it is not great "enough to make you feel quite at ease. The line of demarcation between the true "and the spurious is not sufficiently broad and palpable. The copy you see is vile "or indifferent; and the original, you suspect (but for your partiality to yourself), "is not perhaps much better." That is Hazlitt all over. Let me add that Madame D'Arblay gives a capital sketch of Miss Reynolds's fidgets in the *Memoirs* of her father, i. 331-332; and a very laughable one of Boswell, ii. 190-7; iii. 113-15.

proceeds to inform us, "and indeed his whole figure from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with an idea of his being  
 "a low mechanic; particularly, I believe, a journeyman  
 1770. "tailor." And in proof the lively lady relates that Goldsmith  
 æt. 42. came in one day, at a party at her brother's, very indignant at an insult he had received from some one in a coffee-house; and on explaining it as "the fellow took me for a tailor," all the party present either laughed aloud or showed they suppressed a laugh.\* It is a pity they were not more polite, were it only for their host's sake; since it is certain that these gibes were never countenanced by Reynolds. He knew Goldsmith better; and as he knew, he had painted him. A great artist does not measure a face, tailor-fashion; it is by seizing and showing the higher aspects of character, that he puts upon his work the stamp of history. It is the distinction between truth and a caricature of it, and expresses all the measureless distance between a Reynolds and

\* Recollections in Croker's *Doswell*, 831. It would appear also that the Rev. Mr. Percival Stockdale, a commonplace hanger-on of the booksellers in those days who wisely relinquished literature for the church, and wrote a querulous book of *Memoirs* complaining of his non-appreciation by everybody, appears to have fallen in with the 'tailor' notion marvellously. "Soon after," he says, "my friend Davies had published my translation of Tasso's *Aminta*, I called on him one forenoon, and was "with him in his parlour when Dr. Goldsmith entered, and conversed with us for "about an hour. I had dined with Davies a day or two before, and Goldsmith was "one of the company. He had a beautiful mind, but he was a man of a very mean "aspect, person, and manner. On the morning to which I allude, just before we "were joined by Goldsmith, Davies asked me what I thought of him? I replied "that I held his genius in due estimation, but that I never saw a man who looked "more like a tailor. Before he left us, he desired Davies to let him have my translation of the *Aminta*. As he put it into his pocket, he turned to me, and said: "'Mr. Stockdale, I shall soon take measure of you.' I answered that 'I hoped he "would not pinch me.' From what had passed before he came in, and afterwards, Davies and I, as soon as he had left the house, gave a full indulgence to "our risible faculties. The odd coincidence of Goldsmith's metaphor and of my "comparison, perhaps makes this interview worthy of being related." Such is the story, which I quote from *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Percival Stockdale* (1800), ii. 136-7. Precisely the same story in the same words will be found in the *Life of Goldsmith* by Mr. Prior (ii. 237-9), who introduces it with the remark that Mr. Stockdale's published autobiography "furnishes scarcely an allusion to Goldsmith. His papers, however, supply an anecdote communicated by a lady eminent "for her writings, &c. &c. &c." And then, *totidem verbis*, we have the story. But the habit is so frequent with Mr. Prior of quoting published statements as original communications, that I need hardly have paused to mention it in this instance.

a *Miss Reynolds*, or between such character painting as *Hogarth's* and such caricaturing as *Bunbury's*.\*



No man had seen earlier than Reynolds into Goldsmith's better qualities; no man so loved or honoured him to the last; <sup>1779.</sup> and no man so steadily protected him, with calm, equable, <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> kindly temper, against Johnson's careless sallies.† "It is amazing," said the latter more than once, with that too emphatic habit of 'overcharging' the characteristics of his friends which all agreed in attributing to him, "it is amazing how little Goldsmith knows, "he seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one "else;" and on Reynolds quietly interposing, "Yet there is no "man whose company is more liked," the other, fully conceding this, would explain it by the gratification people felt to find a man of "the most distinguished abilities as a writer" inferior in other respects to themselves. But Reynolds had another explanation. He thought that much of Goldsmith's nonsense, as the

\* See *post*, chap. x.; and, for practical illustration, the present page.

† I have always regretted that the excellent writer, Crabbe, should have invented an illustration of Goldsmith's vanity so opposed to all the known records of his intercourse with Reynolds, as that which these terse and happily-expressed lines convey:

. . . Poets have sicken'd at a dancer's praise;  
And one, the happiest writer of his time,  
Grew pale at hearing Reynolds was sublime;  
That Rutland's duchess wore a heavenly smile,—  
"And I," said he, "neglected all the while!"



nonsense of a man of undoubted wit and understanding, had the essence of conviviality in it.\* He fancied it not seldom put on for that reason, and for no other. "One should take care,"  
 1770.  
 Æt. 42. says Addison, "not to grow too wise for so great a pleasure  
 "of life as laughter;" and some such maxim, Reynolds seems to have thought, was put in practice by Goldsmith.† It was not a little, at any rate, to have given that impression to so wise as well as kind an observer, to a man of whom Johnson said to Boswell that he had known no one who had passed through life with more observation;‡ and the confidence between the friends, which was probably thus established, remained unbroken to the end. I can only discover one disagreement that ever came between them; and the famous dinner parties in Leicester-square

\* Mrs. Piozzi in her *Travels* (ii. 315) sets forth that "poor Dr. Goldsmith" said once, "I would advise every young fellow setting out in life to *love gravy*;" alleging for it the serious reason that "he had formerly seen a glutton's eldest nephew disinherited because his uncle never could persuade him to say he liked gravy." Imagine the dulness that would convert a jocose saying of this kind into an unconscious utterance of grave absurdity!

† "Sir Joshua frequently had heard Goldsmith talk warmly of the pleasure of being liked, and observe how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did, from the envy that attended it; and therefore Sir Joshua was convinced that he was intentionally more absurd," &c. &c. *Northcote*, i. 328. It seems to me difficult to reconcile this with a statement in the same book (i. 248), to the effect that Sir Joshua used to say that Goldsmith looked at, or considered, public notoriety or fame as one great parcel to the whole of which he laid claim, and whoever partook of any part of it, whether dancer, singer, slight-of-hand man, or tumbler, deprived him of his right, and drew off from himself the attention of the world, which he was striving to gain." The truth is that the first passage is copied by Northcote from Boswell, who expressly says that he had it from Reynolds himself, and adds, "with due deference to Sir Joshua's ingenuity, I think the conjecture too refined." (ii. 190, *note*.) Whereas the second saying, attributed to Reynolds, rests solely on Northcote's authority; which I must be excused for saying is not entitled to any weight on such a point as this. I may add that even Beattie, with all his confessed and open dislike of Goldsmith, sides perhaps unconsciously with Reynolds. "His common conversation was a strange mixture of absurdity and silliness; of silliness so great as to make me think sometimes he affected it; yet he was a great genius of no mean rank," &c. Forbes's *Beattie*, iii. 50. Mrs. Piozzi's emphatic manuscript comment, in the volume before referred to (pp. 81 and 122), on Beattie's suggestion that perhaps Goldsmith "affected" silliness, is—"Not he indeed!"

‡ "Sir," said Johnson to Boswell, "I know no man who has passed through life with more observation than Reynolds." And see Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 116, and 204.

were now seldom unenlivened by the good-humour and gaiety of Goldsmith.

Nor is it improbable that, occasionally, they were a little in need of both. "Well, Sir Joshua," said lawyer Dun-<sup>1770.</sup><sub>Æt. 42.</sub> ning on arriving first at one of these parties, "and who "have you got to dine with you to-day? The last time I dined "in your house, the company was of such a sort, that by — I "believe all the rest of the world enjoyed peace for that after- "noon."\* But though vehemence and disputation will at times usurp quieter enjoyments, where men of genius and strong character are assembled, the evidence that has survived of these celebrated meetings in no respect impairs their indestructible interest. They were the first great example that had been given in this country of a cordial intercourse between persons of distinguished pretensions of all kinds,—poets, physicians, lawyers, deans, historians, actors, temporal and spiritual peers, House of Commons men, men of science, men of letters, painters, philosophers, musicians, and lovers of the arts,—meeting on a ground of hearty ease, good-humour, and pleasantry, which exalts my respect for the memory of Reynolds. It was no prim fine table he set them down to. There was little order or arrangement; there was more abundance than elegance; and a happy freedom thrust conventionalism aside. Often was the dinner-board, prepared for seven or eight, required to accommodate itself to fifteen or sixteen; for often, on the very eve of dinner, would Sir Joshua tempt afternoon visitors with intimation that Johnson, or Garrick, or Goldsmith was to dine there. Nor was the want of seats the only difficulty. A want of knives and forks, of plates and glasses, as often succeeded. In something of the same style, too, was the

\* "It is a fact that a certain nobleman, an intimate friend of Reynolds, had "strangely conceived in his mind such a formidable idea of all those persons who "had gained great fame as literary characters, that I have heard Sir Joshua say "he verily believed he could no more have prevailed upon this noble person to "dine at the same table with Johnson and Goldsmith, than with two tygers." Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 329. This is repeated in Hazlitt's *Conversations* (39-42), the nobleman being described as "Lord B—, and a man of good information too."

attendance; the "two or three occasional domestics" were undisciplined; the kitchen had to keep pace with the visitors; and it

was easy to know the guests best acquainted with the  
<sup>1770.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 42.</sup> house, by their never failing to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that they might get them before the first course

was over, and the worst confusion began. Once Sir Joshua was prevailed upon to furnish his table more amply with dinner glasses and decanters, and some saving of time they proved; yet, as these "accelerating utensils" were demolished in the course of service, he could never be persuaded to replace them. "But such trifling embarrassments," added Mr. Courtenay, describing them to Sir James Macintosh, "only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment." It was not the wine, dishes, and cookery, it was not the fish and venison, that were talked of or recommended; those social hours, that irregular convivial talk, had matter of higher relish, and fare more eagerly enjoyed. And amid all the animated bustle of his guests, the host sat perfectly composed; always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drunk, and leaving every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Though so severe a deafness had resulted from cold caught on the continent in early life as to compel the use of a trumpet, Reynolds profited by its use to hear or not to hear, or as he pleased to enjoy the privileges of both, and keep his own equanimity undisturbed.\* "He is the same all the year round," exclaimed Johnson, with honest envy. "In illness and in pain, he is still the same. Sir, he is the most invulnerable man I know; the man with whom, if you should quarrel, you will find the most difficulty how to abuse." Nor

\* Talking of melancholy, Johnson said, "Some men, and very thinking men too, have not those vexing thoughts. Sir Joshua Reynolds is the same all the year round. Beauclerc, except when ill and in pain, is the same." *Boswell*, vi. 120; and see vii. 11. On this latter occasion he joined Burke with Reynolds. "I am not so myself," he added, "but this I do not mention commonly." As to Reynolds's trumpet, let me quote the example of Le Sage: "Il faisoit usage d'un cornet qu'il appellait son bienfaiteur. 'Quand je trouve,' disait-il, 'des visages nouveaux, et que j'espère rencontrer des gens d'esprit, je tiens mon cornet; quand ce sont des sots, je le reserve, et je les défie de m'ennuyer.'"



was this praise obtained by preference of any, but by cordial respect to all; for in Reynolds there was as little of the sycophant as of the tyrant. However high the rank of the guests invited, he waited for none. His dinners were served always <sup>1770.</sup> precisely at five o'clock. His was not the fashionable ill-<sup>Æt. 42.</sup> breeding, says Mr. Courtenay, "which could wait an hour for two "or three persons of title," and put the rest of the company out of humour by the invidious distinction.\*

Such were the memorable meetings, less frequent at first than they afterwards became, from which Goldsmith was now rarely absent. Here appeared the dish of peas one day that were anything but their natural colour, and which one of Beauclerc's waggish friends recommended should be sent to Hammersmith, because "that was the way to Turnham Green [turn 'em green]." It was said in a whisper to Goldsmith; and so tickled and delighted him that he resolved to pass it off for his own at the house of Burke, who had a mighty relish for a bad pun.† But when the time came

\* His biographer Farington estimates his Leicester-square expenses at 2000*l.* a year, "a considerable sum according to the value of money at that time; but he wisely "judged that to be a prudent expenditure, which procured him such advantages." (clxxxv.) Malone remembered a party of fifteen assembled round his table at dinner, of whom twelve were notably distinguished men. (lxxxii.)

† "The noxious streams of St. Stephen's," writes Lord Charlemont, congratulating Burke on the parliamentary recess, "are changed for the pure air of Gregories, oratory "yields to table-talk, and a bad pun now takes place of all other figures of speech." *Burke Correspondence*, i. 166. Who has not felt the weakness, and thought better of the witty and the wise for condescending to it? Dryden said (*Gent. Mag.* ii. 643) that he never knew the wisest man who had a fair opportunity for a good pun, lose the opportunity; and I believe him. "I will tell you a good thing," says Swift to Stella, "I said "to my Lord Carteret. 'So,' says he, 'my Lord — came up to me, and asked me,' &c. "No," said I, 'my Lord — never did, nor ever can come up to you.'—We all pun "here sometimes. Lord Carteret set down Prior the other day in his chariot, and Prior "thanked him for his charity; that was fit for Dilly." (Dillon Ashe, an inordinately punning parson of those days.) *Works*, ii. 139. Again, in one of his letters: "But I'll "tell you a good pun. A fellow hard by pretends to cure agues; and has set out a sign, "and spells it goes. A gentleman and I observing it, he said, 'How does that fellow "'pretend to cure agues?' I said I did not know, but I was sure it was not by a spell." This last was indeed admirable. But the execrable are often worthy of all applause (see Swift's *Works*, iii. 134-136; ii. 129; xiii. 387-433; xv. 351; and his *Correspondence passim*), and I know none more atrocious than may frequently be found in Shakespeare. The reader will perhaps not object, if, in fulfilment of a promise made (*ante*, i. 318), I here subjoin one or two examples of Burke's puns, partly to refute



for repeating it, he had unluckily forgotten the point, and fell into hapless confusion. "That is the way to *make 'em green*," he said: but no one laughed: "I mean that is the *road* to <sup>1770.</sup> "turn 'em green," he blundered out: but still no one <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> laughed: and, as Beauclerc tells the story, he started up disconcerted, and abruptly quitted the table. A tavern he would often quit, Hawkins informs us, if his jokes were unsuccessful; though at the same time he would generally preface them, as with an instinctive distrust of their effect, "now I'll tell you a story of myself, "which some people laugh at and some do not." The worthy knight adds a story something like Beauclerc's, which he says occurred at the breaking up of one of those tavern evenings, when he entreated the company to sit down, and told them if they would call for another bottle they should hear one of his bon-mots. It turned out to be what he had said on hearing of old Sheridan's habit of practising his stage-gestures in a room hung round with ten looking-glasses, "then there were ten ugly fellows

Johnson's charge that he had no humour, and partly to exhibit what was undoubtedly one source of the liking between Burke and Goldsmith,—their common love of a joke, and indifference whether a bad or good one. "When," says Boswell (iv. 29), "Mr. Wilkes, in his days of tumultuous opposition, was borne upon the shoulders of the mob, Mr. Burke (as Mr. Wilkes told me himself, with classical admiration) applied to "him what Horace says of Pindar,—"*numerusque fertur LEGE solutus*." This was excellent, and what Reynolds truly called dignifying a pun. The next, though also classical, is less successful. He said that "Horace has in one line given a description "of a good desirable manor: '*Est modus in rebus, sant certi denique fines*;' that is "to say, a *modus* as to the tithes and certain *fines*." (vii. 175.) A third was in answer to the Prince of Wales, who, having asked Burke if a toastmaster was not absolute, was answered, "Yes, *jure de vino*." See also post, chap. xvii. I again quote Boswell. "I told him I had seen, at a *blue-stocking* assembly, a number of "ladies sitting round a worthy and tall friend of ours (Mr. Langton), listening to "his literature. 'Ay,' said he, 'like maids round a May-pole.'" (iv. 28.) For one of Burke's puns which has relation to a notorious quack of that day, Doctor Rock, squibbed and laughed at in Letter lxxviii. of the *Citizen of the World*, we are indebted to Mr. Croker. Burke one day called the noble-hearted whig physician Brocklesby, *Doctor Rock*, and on his taking some offence at this disreputable appellation, Burke undertook to prove *algebraically* that Rock was his proper name, thus: "*Brock—b=Rock*, or Brock less b, makes Rock. Q.E.D." Croker, 776. Others by Burke have appeared in the course of my narrative, or will hereafter do so, and on the whole we may hardly doubt that Reynolds had good ground for his remark that he had often heard Burke say, in the course of an evening, ten good things, each of which would have served a noted wit (whom he named) to live upon for a twelvemonth.

“together;” whereupon, everybody remaining silent, he asked why they did not laugh, “which they not doing, he without tasting “the wine left the room in anger.” \*

But all this, even if correctly reported, was less the sensi-<sup>1770.</sup>  
tiveness of ill-nature than the sudden shame of exaggerated <sup>Æt. 42.</sup>  
self-distrust. Poor Goldsmith! He could never acquire what it is every one’s duty to learn, the making light of petty annoyances. Consider, Sir, how insignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence,† was, on such occasions, the precious saying of Johnson; who, if he often inflicted the vexation, was commonly the first to suggest its remedy. But Goldsmith never lost his over-sensitive

\* Hawkins’s *Life of Johnson*, 418. That the Sheridan story was a favourite with him might be inferred from the allusion to it introduced in one of his early letters to his cousin Mrs. Lawder, *ante*, i. 144.

† Boswell, ii. 204-5. “I have tried it frequently,” adds Boswell, “with good effect.” For much of the same practical wisdom, invaluable in the ordinary affairs of life, he and all of us are not less indebted to Johnson. Here is another precious piece of counsel. “When any fit of anxiety, or gloominess, or perversion of mind lays hold upon you, make it a rule not to publish it by complaints, but exert your whole care to hide it; by endeavouring to hide it, you will drive it away. Be always busy.” And see v. 333; vii. 302. Boswell had a habit of low spirits, very sincere in its way, I have no doubt, though Johnson had no toleration for it. “I hoped you had got rid of all this hypocrisy of misery,” he says to him on one occasion. “What have you to do with liberty and necessity? or what more than to hold your tongue about it?” (viii. 42-3). Still poor Boswell would fall again into his fit, and ask him what was the use of all the trouble men took for objects of pursuit in themselves indifferent. “Sir,” said he in an animated tone, “it is driving on the system of life.” (viii. 90.) So, when Boswell consulted him as to a dispute in which he found himself involved, he was reminded that life is but short, and no time can be afforded but for the indulgence of real sorrow, or contests upon questions seriously momentous. “Let us not throw away any of our days upon useless resentment, or contend who shall hold out longest in stubborn malignity. It is best not to be angry; and best, in the next place, to be quickly reconciled.” (vi. 219.) In the same spirit of consummate good sense was his counsel to Boswell, on another occasion, “Make the most and best of your lot, and compare yourself not with the few that are above you, but with the multitudes which are below you. Go steadily forwards with lawful business or honest diversions.” And see vi. 47. But among all the various proofs of Johnson’s manly practical wisdom, I know none that affects me more than the remark he makes, when, the year before Goldsmith’s death, Boswell’s troublesome kindness had reminded him of his birthday, and it occurs to him, after-recalling a gloomy retrospect of threescore and four years, in which little has been done and little enjoyed, a life diversified by misery, spent part in the sluggishness of penury and part under the violence of pain, in gloomy discontent or importunate distress—“But perhaps I am better than I should have been if I had been less afflicted. With this I will try to be content.” *Letters to Mrs. Piozzi*, i. 134.

nature. His very suspicions involved him in unreserved disclosures which revealed the unspoiled simplicity of his heart. Alas ! that the subtle insight which is so able to teach others, should so often be powerless to guide itself ! Could Goldsmith only have been as indifferent as he was earnest, as impudent as he was frank, he might have covered effectually every imperfection in his character. Could he but have practised in his person any part of the exquisite address he possessed with his pen, not an objection would have been heard against him.\* But when the pen was put down, the enchanter was without his wand, and an ordinary mortal like the rest of us. That consciousness of self which so often gives the charm and the truth to his creations, was the very thing over which he stumbled when he left the fanciful and walked into the real world. All then became patent, and a prey to critics the reverse of generous. He wore his heart upon his sleeve. "Sir, rather than not speak, he will talk of what he knows himself to be ignorant, which can only end in exposing him."† He could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind, says Davies ; he blurted it out, says Johnson, to see what became of it. Thus when Hawkins tells us that he heard him say in company, "Yesterday I heard an excellent story and would relate it now if I thought any of you able to understand it,"‡ the idea conveyed

\* Rochester expressed exactly the reverse of this in speaking of Shadwell, when he said that if he had burnt all he wrote, and printed all he spoke, he would have had more wit and humour than any other poet ; and measuring Goldsmith by Shadwell, we surely may rest perfectly satisfied with the relative accomplishments and deficiencies of each.

† "I wonder," rejoined Boswell, who had drawn forth this remark by one of his own to the same effect, "if he feels that he exposes himself. If he was with two tailors"—"Or with two founders," said Johnson, interrupting him, "he would fall a-talking on the method of making cannon, though both of them would soon see that he did not know what metal a cannon is made of." We were, adds Boswell, "very social and merry in his room this forenoon." (iv. 309-10.) But does not the last remark give us the clue to that conscious humour of exaggeration, which was for the most part habitually indulged in by "the set" when any of Goldsmith's foibles came under remark ?

‡ "The company laughed, and one of them said, 'Doctor, you are very rude,' but he made no apology. He once complained to a friend in these words: 'Mr. Martinelli is a rude man ; I said, in his hearing, that there were no good



is not an impertinence, but simply that the company, including Hawkins, *was* a very stupid one. Yet if we would have politeness perfectly defined, we have but to turn to the writings of the man who thus imperfectly practised it. Never was the distinction <sup>1770.</sup> better put than where he tells us why ceremony should be <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> different in every country while true politeness is everywhere the same, because the former is but the artificial help which ignorance assumes to imitate the latter, which is the result of good sense and goodnature.\* Unhappily it was the best part of his own nature which he too often laid aside, when he left the society of himself for that of his friends. "Good heavens, Mr. Foote," exclaimed a lively actress at the Haymarket, "what a *humdrum* kind of man "Doctor Goldsmith appears to be in our green-room, compared "with the figure he makes in his poetry!" "The reason of that, "madam," replied the manager, "is, because the Muses are better "companions than the Players."† Thinking his companions more stupid than his thoughts, it certainly was not his business to say so; yet he could not help awkwardly saying it. His mind relieved itself, as a necessity, of all that lay upon it. His kindly purposes, and simple desires; his sympathies to assist others, and his devices

"writers among the Italians, and he said to one that sat near him that I was "very ignorant." *Sir John Hawkins*, as quoted by Mr. Mitford in his life, clxxvi.

\* "A person possessed of those qualities, though he had never seen a court, is "truly agreeable; and if without them, would continue a clown, though he had been "all his life a gentleman usher." *Citizen of the World*, Letter xxxix. I may remark that Northcote the painter, one of the last celebrities in our day who could speak familiarly of Goldsmith and Johnson as of men he had known, exhibited just the reverse of the distinction noted in the text. "I have lived on his conversation," says Hazlitt, "with undiminished relish ever since I can remember,—and one of his "tête-à-têtes would at any time make an Essay; but he cannot himself write, because "he loses himself in the connecting passages, is fearful of the effect, and wants the "habit of bringing his ideas into one focus or point of view. . . His conversation "might be called *picture-talking*. He has always some pet allusion or anecdote. "A "young engraver came into his room the other day, with a print which he had put "into the crown of his hat, in order not to crumple it, and he said it had been nearly "blown away in passing along the street. 'You put me in mind,' said Northcote, 'of "a bird-catcher at Plymouth, who used to put the birds he had caught into his hat to "bring them home, and one day meeting my father in the road, he pulled off his "hat to make him a low bow, and all the birds flew away.'"

† Cooke's *Memoirs of Foote*, iii. 78.



to make better appearance for himself; his innocent distrusts, and amusing vanities; the sense of his own undeserved disadvantages, and vexation at others' as undeserved success: everything  
1770.  
Æt. 42. sprang to his lips,\* and it was only from himself he could conceal anything.

Even Burke could not spare that weakness, nor refrain from practising upon it, not very justifiably, for the amusement of his friends. He and an Irish acquaintance (who lived to be Colonel O'Moore, to tell the anecdote to Mr. Croker, and perhaps to colour it a little) were walking to dine one day with Reynolds, when, on arriving in Leicester-square, they saw Goldsmith, also on his way to the same dinner party, standing near a crowd of people who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of one of the hotels. "Observe Goldsmith," said Burke to O'Moore, "and mark what passes between him and me by-and-bye at Sir Joshua's." They passed on, and were soon joined at Reynolds's by Goldsmith, whom Burke affected to receive very coolly. "This seemed to vex poor Goldsmith," says the narrator of the story; and he begged Mr. Burke would tell him how he had had the misfortune to offend him. Burke appeared very reluctant to speak; but, after a good deal of pressing, said that "he was really ashamed to keep up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such monstrous indiscretions as Goldsmith had just exhibited in the square." With great earnestness Goldsmith protested himself unconscious of what was meant. "Why," said Burke, "did you not exclaim, as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the crowd must be for staring with such admiration at those *painted Jezebels*, while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" "Surely, surely, my dear friend," exclaimed Goldsmith horror-struck, "I did not say so?" "Nay," returned Burke, "if you had not said so, how should I have known it?"

\* One of the stories related of him is that he was dining one day in the city with a very wealthy carcass butcher (doubtless one of his friends of the Wednesday-club), when, without attempting to conceal his amazement at the splendour of the house and the entertainment, he asked his host openly before several strangers, "How much a year he made by his business?" *Europ. Mag.* xix. 94.

"That's true," answered Goldsmith, with great humility: "I am very sorry; it was very foolish. *I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it.*"\* The anecdote is more creditable to Goldsmith, <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> notwithstanding the weakness in his character it unquestionably reveals, than to Burke, to whose disadvantage it was probably afterwards remembered. It should be added that Burke had a turn for ridicule of that kind; and got up a more good-humoured trick against Goldsmith at his own house, not long after this, in which a lively kinswoman was played off as a raw Irish authoress, arrived expressly to see "the great Goldsmith," to praise him, and get his subscription to her poems, which, with liberal return of the praise (for several she had read out aloud), the simple poet gave, abusing them heartily the instant she was gone. Garrick founded a farce upon the incident, which with the title of the *Irish Widow* was played in 1772.†

Not always at a disadvantage, however, was Goldsmith in these social meetings. At times he took the lead, and kept it, to even Johnson's annoyance. "The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation," he would say on such occasions, "is this: he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man, it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith, it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself."‡ This is not the way to characterise the talk of an "idiot." Indeed,

\* Croker's *Boswell*, 141.

† For the sake of one or two allusions in it worth preserving, I quote from a letter of Dr. Hoadly to Garrick (2nd Nov. 1772) written on the occasion of this farce. "I hear your *Irish Widow* was at first too Irish—i.e. too impudent—and many defalcations were necessary. I see it goes on; but whether it runs or limps, I cannot judge. By the story of it in the *News*, the principal scene must be from the *Marriage Forcée* of Molière; and the lady being her own champion, must, one would imagine, be from my farce of that name (the hint at least), which you remember I once read to you, in days of yore, at poor Peg Woffington's lodgings. A gentleman told me the other day that you had said you never saw such good acting as Beckford's when he made his speech to the King, at which you was present. Is it true? I have a reason for asking." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 489-90.

‡ *Boswell*, iii. 233.

sometimes, when the humour suited him, he would put even Burke's talk at the same disadvantage as Goldsmith's. Mentioning the

latter as not agreeable, because it was always for fame; "and  
<sup>1770.</sup>  
 "the man who does so never can be pleasing, the man who  
<sup>Æt. 42.</sup>

"talks to unburden his mind is the man to delight you;" he would add that "an eminent friend of ours" (so Boswell generally introduces Burke) was not so agreeable as the variety of his knowledge would otherwise make him, because he talked partly from ostentation:\* and, before the words were forgotten (the next day, if in better humour), would not hesitate to put forth Burke's talk as emphatically the ebullition of his mind, as in no way connected with the desire of distinction, and indulged only because his mind was full.† Such remarks and comparisons at the least make it manifest that Goldsmith's conversation was not the folly which it is too often assumed to have been; though doubtless it was sometimes too ambitious, and fell short of the effort implied in it. He did not keep sufficiently in mind the precious advice for which Lady Pomfret was so grateful to the good old lady who gave it to her, When she had nothing to say, to say nothing.‡ "I fired at them all, and did not make a hit; I angled all night, but "I caught nothing!" was his own candid remark to little Cradock on one occasion.§ With a greater show of justice than he cared generally to afford him in this matter, Johnson laid his failure, on other occasions, rather to the want of temper than the want of power. "Goldsmith should not," he said, "be for ever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now, Goldsmith putting himself against another, is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's

\* Boswell, vii. 78.

† Bos. viii. 155. Here he was contrasting Burke with Charles Fox, whom he held to have been somewhat spoiled as a talker in private by his extraordinary public success.

‡ Lady Pomfret's *Letters*, ii. 161.

§ *Memoirs*, i. 231; iv. 280.

"while . . . When Goldsmith contends, if he gets the better it is "a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation; if he "does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."\*

It should be added that there were other causes than these <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> for Goldsmith's frequent vexation. Miss Reynolds relates that she overheard a gentleman at her brother's table, to whom he was talking his best, suddenly stop him in the middle of a sentence with "Hush! Hush! Doctor Johnson is going to say some- "thing."† The like was overheard (unless this be the original story adapted to her purpose by Miss Reynolds) at the first Academy dinner; when a Swiss named Moser, the first keeper appointed, interrupted him "when talking with fluent vivacity" to claim silence for Dr. Johnson, on seeing the latter roll himself as if about to speak ("Stay, stay, Doctor Shonson is going to "zay zomething"), and was paid back for his zeal by Goldsmith's retort, "And are you sure you'll *comprehend* what he says?"‡ His happy rebuke of a similar subserviency of Boswell's, that he was for turning into a monarchy what ought to be a republic, is

\* *Bos.* iii. 273.

† "Dr. Johnson seemed to have much more kindness for Goldsmith, than Goldsmith had for him. He always appeared to be overawed by Johnson, particularly "when in company with people of any consequence, always as if impressed with "some fear of disgrace; and, indeed, well he might. I have been witness to many "mortifications he has suffered in Dr. Johnson's company." Croker's *Boswell*, 831. I suspect the mortification described in the text, however, to be another instance of the compilation of this lady's Recollections from already existing anecdotes, and that her story is but another form of Boswell's. It seems to have been quite a trick with everybody that had lived in his time to repeat old stories of Goldsmith as occurrences within their own experience. Sir Herbert Croft, the author of *Love and Madness*, who died in Paris in 1816, represented himself to Charles Nodier as Oliver's greatest friend, though I do not find evidence of his having known him at all; and in his charming little memoir Nodier says: "Le chevalier Croft, qui avait été le meilleur "ami de Goldsmith, et qui méritait bien de l'être, m'a dit souvent que le système de "Goldsmith était d'obliger jusqu'au point de se mettre exactement dans la position "de l'indigent qu'il avait secouru; et quand on lui reprochait ces libéralités im- "prudentes, par lesquelles il se substituait à la détresse d'un inconnu, il se contentait "de répondre: 'J'ai des ressources, moi, et ce malheureux n'avait de ressources que "moi.'" 16-17.

‡ Boswell adds, "This was, no doubt, very provoking, especially to one so irritable "as Goldsmith, who frequently mentioned it with strong expressions of indignation." iii. 301.



recorded by Boswell himself,\* who adds, with that air of patronage which is now so exquisitely ludicrous, "For my part I like very

"well to hear honest Goldsmith talk away carelessly;" and  
 1770.  
 Et. 42. upon the whole evidence it seems clear enough, that, much as his talk suffered from his mal-address, in substance it was

not in general below the average of that of other celebrated men. Certainly, therefore, if we concede some truth to the Johnsonian antithesis which even good-humoured Langton repeats so complacently, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had," we must yet admit it with due allowance. Walpole said much the same thing of Hume, whose writings he thought so superior to his conversation that he protested the historian understood nothing till he had written upon it;† and even of his friend Gray he said he was the worst company in the world, for he never talked easily: yet, in the sense of professed talk, the same might be said of the best company in the world, for, in the mere "cunning fence" of retort, Walpole himself talked ill, and so did Gay; and so did Dryden, Pope, and Swift; and so did Hogarth and Addison.‡

Nothing is recorded of those men, or of others as famous, so

\* "One evening, in a circle of wits, he found fault with me for talking of Johnson as entitled to the honour of unquestionable superiority. 'Sir,' said he, 'you are "for making a monarchy of what should be a republic.'" (iii. 300.) That is surely very happily said.

† Pinkerton's *Correspondence*, i. 70.

‡ Pope says of Dryden (in Spence's *Anecdotes*) that he was "not very conversible;" and Dryden describes his own talk as "slow and dull." "As much company as I have kept," says Pope of himself, "and as much as I love it, I love reading better." (Spence, 45, Ed. 1820.) Walpole describes one of the dullest days he ever passed to have been between "tragedy and comedy," when he had Gray and Hogarth to dine with him. The one wouldn't talk, and the other couldn't. Gray "never converses easily," he said on another occasion; "all his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences." *Collected Letters*, ii. 240. The remark in the text, it is at the same time to be remembered, applies to conversation in the sense of a professed art; and is not to be supposed to imply that these famous men, even though they were not expert at the cunning fence of talk, might not nevertheless be (as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu protests Addison was) "the best company in the world." Swift gives us not a bad idea of at least one quality which must have made Addison amusing company, in telling us that Stella had a trick which she learned from him, of always encouraging a man in absurdity, instead of endeavouring to extricate him. And see *ante*, 78 (note).

clever as the specimens of the talk of Goldsmith which Boswell himself has not cared to forget. Nay, even he goes so far as to admit, that "he was often very fortunate in his witty contests, even  
 "when he entered the lists with Johnson himself." An im-<sup>1770.</sup>  
 mortal instance was remembered by Reynolds. He, Johnson, <sup>Æt. 42.</sup>  
 and Goldsmith were together one day, when the latter said that he thought he could write a good fable; mentioned the simplicity which that kind of composition requires; and observed that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. "For  
 "instance," said he, "the fable of the little fishes who saw birds fly  
 "over their heads, and, envying them, petitioned Jupiter to be  
 "changed into birds. The skill," he continued, "consists in making  
 "them talk like little fishes." At this point he observed Johnson shaking his sides and laughing, whereupon he made this home thrust. "Why, Mr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to  
 "think; for if *you* were to make little fishes talk, they would talk  
 "like WHALES."\* This was giving Johnson what Garrick called a

\* The remark shows what a capital book Goldsmith's fairy stories for children would have been (*ante*, i. 251, *note*), and what a loss the nursery libraries of this kingdom have experienced. Failing this, however, they have certainly of late had a substitute well deserving of mention here, in Hans Andersen's *Fairy Tales*. I do not admire that writer's novels generally, but in his children's legends there seems to me to be a surprising sense of the variety of being that exists in the universe, and a subtle sympathy with it. So intimate a knowledge is conveyed to us of the feelings of ducks and ducklings, swans and storks, mermans and mermaidens, nightingales, flowers, and daisies, even of slugs and cuttlefish, and of what all sorts of animated creatures round about us think, do, and might say if they could speak, that one begins to feel as Mrs. Gulliver did when her husband returned from Houynhnm land. Not only do Andersen's whales and little fishes and bulls talk all in character, but even his vegetables. His green peas have as much conversational character as his ducks and geese; nay, his very peg-tops and balls are full of individuality. A "daisy" with him is quite a sweet creature for the pathetic and pastoral beauty of her tongue; and one of his "leather balls" is of so aristocratical a character, that when proposals are made to her by a "peg-top," because they happen to have been companions in the same drawer, she indignantly asks him whether he is aware that her "father and mother were morocco slippers," and that she has "cork in her body." Nor can I enough admire his picture of the stork parading about on his long red legs, discoursing in Egyptian, which language he had learned from his mother. Is not Egyptian the very language that by way of accomplishment a stork would know? But the prince of all his stories, for its thorough illustration of the spirit of humbug, and of the way in which the great and small vulgar agree to cant about what they do not believe, is the "Emperor's New Clothes," the idea of which Andersen seems to have found in an earlier German tale. I commend it to all readers.

forcible hug,\* and it shook laughter out of the big man in his own despite. But in truth no one, as Boswell has admitted, could take such "adventurous liberties" with the great social despot, <sup>1770.</sup> "and escape unpunished." † Beaucherc tells us that on Goldsmith originating, one day, a project for a third theatre in London solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the supposed tyranny of managers (a project often renewed since, and always sure to fail, for the simple reason that authors themselves become managers, and all authors cannot be heard), Johnson treated it slightly: upon which the other retorted, "Ay, ay, this may be nothing to you, who can now shelter yourself behind the corner of a pension;" and Johnson bore it with perfect good-humour. But the most amusing instance connected with the pension occurred a year or two afterwards, when, on the appearance of Mason's exquisite *Heroic Epistle*, ‡ Goldsmith, delighted

\* Boswell, lii. 274.

† Stockdale describes an argument between Johnson and Goldsmith at Tom Davies's dinner-table this year, in which, on the other hand, one may perceive the kind of subject into which the inferior disputant often blundered indiscreetly, without the support of either knowledge or good taste. "Among other topics, Warburton claimed our attention. Goldsmith took a part against Warburton, whom Johnson strenuously defended, with many strong arguments, and with bright sallies of eloquence. Goldsmith ridiculously asserted that Warburton was a weak writer. This misapplied characteristic Dr. Johnson refuted. I shall never forget one of the happy metaphors with which he strengthened and illustrated his refutation. "Warburton," said he, "may be absurd, but he will never be weak: he flounders well." Goldsmith," adds Mr. Stockdale, "made a poor figure in conversation: in that exercise of the mind he was as indigent of force and expression as Johnson was superabundant in both." Percival Stockdale's *Memoirs*, ii. 64.

‡ Of this once so disputed authorship there is now no doubt, or that Walpole was privy to it all along. See *Correspondence of Mason and Walpole*, *passim*. Nicholls tells us, that, on Mason expressing offence at the king for having reflected on him with severity on some occasion, he remarked to him, "That is a trifle for you to say, who are the author of the *Heroic Epistle*;" on which Mason replied instantly, in a surly, nasal tone, which was not unusual to him, "I am told the king thinks so, and he is welcome." Gray's *Works*, v. 40. It is very amusing now to read Percival Stockdale's remark in his *Memoirs* (ii. 88) on Mason's satire. "A piece of finer and more poignant poetical irony never was written. It was foolishly given by many people to Mason: it was totally different from his manner; its force, its acuteness, its delicacy, and urbanity of genius prove that he was incapable to write it. Yet he was absurdly and conceitedly offended with those who supposed him to be the author of it," &c. &c. Johnson of course detested Mason for what he called his whiggism and his priggism, but there were things in the *Heroic Epistle* which



with it himself, carried it off to his friend, and was allowed to read it out to him from beginning to end with a running accompaniment of laughter; \* in which Johnson as heartily joined at the invocation to George the Third's selected, and in <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> part pilloried, pensioners, as at the encounter of Charles Fox with the Jews.

Does Envy doubt? Witness, ye chosen train!  
 Who breathe the sweets of his Saturnian reign;  
 Witness ye Hills, ye JOHNSONS, Scots, Shebbeares,  
 Hark to my call, for some of you have ears.  
 Let David Hume, from the remotest North,  
 In see-saw sceptic scruples hint his worth;  
 David, who there supinely deigns to lie  
 The fattest hog of Epicurus' sty! &c.

When one of the most active of the second-rate politicians, and the great go-between of the attempted alliance between the Chatham and Rockingham whigs, Tommy Townshend, so called not satirically but to distinguish him from his father, anticipated in the present year that connection of Johnson's and Shebbeare's names (I formerly described them pensioned together, "the He-Bear and the She-Bear" as some one humorously said), he did not get off so easily. But Johnson had brought these allusions on himself by plunging into party-war, at the opening of the year, with a pamphlet on the *False Alarm*, as he called the excitement on Wilkes's expulsion, in which he did not spare the opposition; and which, written in two nights at Thrale's,† continued to attract

he would have liked even if he had known the writer, just as he persisted in admiring passages notwithstanding his dislike of its general tone, and freely forgave its laugh at himself for its equally hearty laugh at many of his favourite aversions.

\* This was in 1773. See *Boswell*, viii. 90-91, and see *Coll. Lett.* v. 342. Mason was making but a poor return for this appreciation of his humour, when, falling into Walpole's tone in the course of their conferences about the *Epistle*, he writes à propos of one of the many "Postscripts" which its success elicited: "If I send for a new pamphlet, it is above a fortnight before it arrives. This was the case with the *Heroic Postscript*, which you mentioned in your last. But you did not tell me that I had the honour of being placed in the same line with Doctor Goldsmith; if you had, I should hardly have sent for it. However, I am more contented with my company than Garrick will be with his." *Walpole and Mason Correspondence*, i. 131.

† "Between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night." Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 41. It was not long after this that the jolly landlord of the



attention. Boswell tells us that when Townshend made the attack, Burke, though of Townshend's party, stood warmly forth in defence of his friend; but the recent publication of the *Cavendish* <sup>1770.</sup> *Debates* corrects this curious error. Burke spoke after Townshend, and complained of the infamous private libels of the *Town and Country Magazine* against members of the opposition, but he did not refer to Townshend's attack: he left the vindication of Johnson to their common friend Fitzherbert, who rose with an emphatic eulogy at the close of the debate, and called him "a pattern of morality." In truth Burke had this year committed himself too fiercely to the stormy side of opposition, to be able to stretch his hand across even to his old friend Johnson. His friend had cast his lot with the enemies of freedom, and was left to fare with them. An unsparing vehemence in the House of Commons now strikingly contrasted with his calm philosophic severity in the press. He was charged with want of common candour, and he denounced the sickly habit. "Virtues are not to be sacrificed to candour." \* He was reproached for his following of certain leaders, and he made the reproach his glory. "When I find good men, I will cling to them, adhere to them, follow them in and out, wash the very feet they stand on. I will wash their feet and be subservient, not from interest but from principle. It shall be my glory." † Those leaders were still the Rockinghams, but not so isolated as of old. There were yet dissensions between the rival parties of opposition, but not such as withheld them from concentrating, for this one while at least, the hate and bitterness of both on the government. The Grenvilles had too great a grudge against the Bedfords too freely to indulge at its expense

inn close by Chatsworth, in answer to Boswell's question of affected ignorance as to who "the celebrated Dr. Johnson" was that he was boasting to have had in his house, "Sir," said he, "Johnson, the great writer; Oddity, as they call him. He's the greatest writer in England; he writes for the ministry; he has a correspondence abroad, and let's them know what's going on." *Boswell*, vii. 30.

\* *Cavendish Debates*, i. 276. How well and wisely he continues! "To mix a little truth and falsehood, a little right and wrong, that is a disposition in all men; a fault in all public men of the great world."

† *Cavendish Debates*, i. 277.

their grudge against the Rockinghams; Chatham had suffered too bitterly for his own mistake, to continue his feud with either; and the Rockinghams themselves, content with Burke's masterly *Observations* \* defending them against Grenville's finance, had <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> waived their dislike of Wilkes, and backed even faction in the city and Lord Temple in the Upper House. The excitement was unexampled.† Desertion on either side was denounced as the worst of crimes. Language unheard till now was launched from both Houses at the government. Lord Shelburne dared the Premier to find "a wretch so base and mean-spirited" as to take the seals Lord Camden had flung down. In evil hour, poor Charles Yorke, Lord Rockingham's attorney-general, and sensitive as he was accomplished, accepted the challenge; and then, maddened by his own reproaches, perished within two days, his patent of peerage lying incomplete before him. Chatham rose in his place in the Lords to a height of daring which even he had never reached, and, resolving to be "a scarecrow of violence to the gentle warblers of the grove, "the moderate whigs and temperate statesmen,"‡ prayed that rather than any compromise should now be made, or the people should veil their representative rights to their governors, either the question might be brought to practical issue, or *Discord prevail for Ever!* Grafton sank beneath the storm, even bodily disabled for his office by the attacks of Junius; and his place was filled by Lord North. But Junius gathered strength, the stronger the opponent that faced him; and his terrors increased as preparation was made to cope with them. His libels conquered the law. Language which Burke told the House he had read with chilled blood, juries sent away unconvicted.§ In vain were printers hunted down, and

\* *Works*, i. 213.

† In the midst of it it is not unamusing or uninteresting to lend an ear now and then to Horace Walpole. "Everybody talks of the constitution, but all sides forget "that the constitution is extremely well, and would do very well, if they would but "let it alone. Indeed it must be a strong constitution, considering how long it has "been quacked and doctored." *Letters to Mann*, ii. 71-2.

‡ *Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 469.

§ "What is it that has wrought so great a change in the temper and disposition "of the people, that they now countenance the most audacious, the most wicked "libels?" Burke: *Cavendish Debates*, ii. 106.

small booksellers, and even humble milkmen. In vain did "the whole French court with their gaudy coaches and jack boots," go out to hunt the little hare. The great boar of the forest, as <sup>1770.</sup> Burke called the libeller, still, and always, broke through the <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> toils; and sorry was the sport of following after vermin. North could not visit the palace without seeing the *Letter to the King* posted up against the wall; the Chief Justice could not enter his court without seeing the *Letter to Lord Mansfield* impudently facing him.\* There was no safety in sending poor milkmen to prison. There was no protection. The thrust was mortal; but a rapier and a ruffe alone were visible in the dark alley from which it came.

\* "Shall I state the miserable condition of the Judge in Westminster-hall? He has a mace, and a trainbearer: yet, on both sides of the hall are seen posted up, Junius's *Letter to Lord Chief Justice Mansfield*. I tell you, that neither their maces nor their trainbearers can make the judges respected, while these things are endured. . . . But you cannot punish." Burke: *Cavendish Deb.* ii. 107.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

1770.

BENEATH these dark and desperate struggles of party profligacy, the more peaceful current of life meanwhile flowed on, and had its graces and enjoyments; not the least of them from Goldsmith's hand. "This day at 12," said the *Public Advertiser*<sup>1770.</sup> of the 26th of May, "will be published, price two shillings, *The Deserted Village*, a Poem. By Doctor Goldsmith. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's Head in Catherine Street, Strand." Its success was instant and decisive. A second edition was called for on the seventh of June, a third on the fourteenth, a fourth (carefully revised) on the twenty-eighth, and on the sixteenth of August a fifth edition appeared. Even Goldsmith's enemies in the press were silent, and nothing interrupted the praise which greeted him on all sides. One tribute he did not hear, and was never conscious of; yet from truer heart or finer genius he had none, and none that should have given him greater pride. Gray was passing the summer at Malvern, the last summer of his life,\* with

\* He died suddenly at Cambridge in the summer of 1771, in his fifty-fifth year. See Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, ii. 171. It is pleasant to quote his last letter to Walpole, written a few weeks before. "Atheism is a vile dish, though all the cooks of France combine to make new sauces to it. As to the soul, perhaps they may have none on the continent, but I do think we have such things in England; "Shakespeare, for example, I believe had several to his snare." Nor can I say farewell to one with whose wit and wisdom I have enriched so many of these pages, without borrowing from his common-place book what I have always thought as delicate a critical remark as ever was made. "In former times, they loved, I will



his friend Nicholls, when the poem came out; and he desired Nicholls to read it aloud to him. He listened to it with fixed attention, and soon exclaimed, "*This man is a poet.*" \*

1770.  
Æt. 42.

The judgment has since been affirmed by hundreds of thousands of readers, and any adverse appeal is little likely now to be lodged against it. Within the circle of its claims and pretensions, a more entirely satisfactory and delightful poem than the *Deserted Village* was probably never written. It lingers in the memory where once it has entered; and such is the softening influence, on the heart even more than the understanding, of the mild, tender, yet clear light which makes its images so distinct and lovely, that there are few who have not wished to rate it higher than poetry of yet higher genius. "What true and pretty "pastoral images," exclaimed Burke, years after the poet's death, "has Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village*! They beat all: Pope, "and Philips, and Spenser too, in my opinion."† But opinions that appear exaggerated may in truth be often reconciled to very sober sense; and, where any extraordinary popularity has existed, good reason is generally to be shown for it. Of the many clever and indeed wonderful writings that from age to age are poured

"not say tediousness, but length, and a train of circumstances in a narration. The "vulgar do so still: it gives an air of reality to the facts, it fixes the attention, raises "and keeps in suspense their expectation, and supplies the place of their little "and lifeless imagination; and it keeps pace with the slow motion of their own "thoughts. Tell them a story as you would to a man of wit; it will appear to them "as an object seen in the night by a flash of lightning: but when you have placed "it in various lights, and various positions, they will come at last to see and feel it "as well as others. But we need not confine ourselves to the vulgar, and to understandings beneath our own. *Circumstance* ever was, and ever will be, the essence "both of poetry and oratory. It has in some sort the same effect upon every mind "that it has upon that of the populace; and I fear the quickness and delicate impatience of these polished times are but the forerunners of the decline of all those "beautiful arts which depend upon the imagination. . . Homer, the father of "*circumstance*, has occasion for the same apology." As I transcribe this passage a return is published of the results of the first year's experience of the Manchester Free Library, from which it appears that no books of any class have excelled in popularity, as tested by the frequency of the demand made for them, the novels of De Foe. The secret of this is explained by Gray. 1853.

\* *Works*, v. 36. "He thought Goldsmith a genuine poet," Mr. Nicholls adds.

† "That is," Burke adds, "in the pastoral, for I go no farther." Letter to Shackleton, 6th May, 1780. *Correspondence*, ii. 347.

forth into the world, what is it that puts upon the few the stamp of immortality, and makes them seem as indestructible as nature? What is it but their wise rejection of everything superfluous? —being grave histories, or natural stories, of everything <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> that is *not* history or nature? being poems, of everything that is *not* poetry, however much resembling it; and especially of that prodigal accumulation of thoughts and images, which, until properly sifted and selected, is as the unhewn to the chiselled marble? What is it, in short, but the unity, completeness, polish, and perfectness in every part, which Goldsmith attained? It may be said that his range is limited, and that, whether in his poetry or his prose, he seldom wanders far from the ground of his own experience: but within that circle, how potent is his magic, what a command it exercises over the happiest forms of art, with what a versatile grace it moves between what saddens us in humour or smiles on us in grief, and how unerring our response of laughter or of tears! Thus, his pictures may be small; may be far from historical pieces, amazing or confounding us; may be even, if severest criticism will have it so, mere happy *tableaux de genre* hanging up against our walls: but their colours are exquisite and unfading; they have that universal expression which never rises higher than the comprehension of the humblest, yet is ever on a level with the understanding and appreciation of the loftiest; they possess that familiar sweetness of household expression which wins them welcome, alike where the rich inhabit and in huts where poor men lie; and there, improving and gladdening all, they are likely to hang for ever.

Johnson, though he had taken equal interest in the progress of this second poem, contributing to the manuscript the four lines which stand last, yet thought it inferior to the *Traveller*. Time has not confirmed *that* judgment. Were it only that the field of contemplation in the *Traveller* is somewhat desultory, and that (as a later poet pointed out) its successor has an endearing locality, and introduces us to beings with whom the imagination is ready to contract a friendship, the higher place must be given to the

*Deserted Village.* Goethe tells us the transport with which the circle he now lived in hailed it, when they found themselves once more as in another beloved Wakefield; and with what zeal he at once set to work to translate it into German.\* All the characteristics of the first poem seem to me developed in the second; with as chaste a simplicity, with as choice a selectness of natural expression, in verse of as musical cadence; but with yet greater earnestness of purpose, and a far more human interest. On the other hand, it is subject to the remark, which indeed has been made against it, not merely that it is founded on false reasoning, but that, in order to support its theory, things which could never have co-existed are brought together,† and a village is de-

\* The passage from his *Autobiography* is well worth quoting: "A little poem, which we passionately received into our circle, allowed us from henceforward to think of nothing else. Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* necessarily delighted every one at that grade of cultivation, in that sphere of thought. Not a living and active, but a departed, vanished existence was described; all that one so readily looked upon, that one loved, prized, sought passionately in the present, to take part in it with the cheerfulness of youth. Highdays and holydays in the country, church consecrations and fairs, the solemn assemblage of the elders under the village linden-tree, supplanted in its turn by the lively delight of youth in dancing, while the more educated classes show their sympathy. How seemly did these pleasures appear, moderated as they were by an excellent country pastor, who understood how to smooth down and remove all that went too far, that gave occasion to quarrel and dispute. Here again we found an honest Wakefield, in his well-known circle, yet no longer in his living bodily form, but as a shadow recalled by the soft mournful tones of the elegiac poet. The very thought of this picture is one of the happiest possible, when once the design is formed to evoke once more an innocent past with a graceful melancholy. And in this kindly endeavour, how well has the Englishman succeeded in every sense of the word! I shared the enthusiasm for this charming poem with Götter, who was more felicitous than myself with the translation undertaken by us both; for I had too painfully tried to imitate in our language the delicate significance of the original, and thus had well agreed with single passages, but not with the whole." *Truth and Poetry from my own Life* (translated by Mr. Oxenford), l. 474. And see *Ib.* i. 506.

† Macaulay has put this most forcibly. "It is made up of incongruous parts. The village in its happy days is a true English village. The village in its decay is an Irish village. The felicity and the misery which Goldsmith has brought close together belong to two different countries, and to two different stages in the progress of society. He had assuredly never seen in his native island such a rural paradise, such a seat of plenty, content, and tranquillity, as his Auburn. He had assuredly never seen in England all the inhabitants of such a paradise turned out of their homes in one day and forced to emigrate in a body to America. The hamlet he had probably seen in Kent: the ejection he had probably seen in





STERNE.



SMOLLET



CANONBURY TOWER, FROM AN OLD ENGRAVING.





scribed in its prosperity which could never have been the same described in its decay. To this Goldsmith doubtless would have said what he said to the friend he described his plan to, just after the poem was begun. "I remember it in my own <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> country, and have seen it in this." He would have been indifferent to the objection, if even able to see it. As his plan had regard to neither country singly, he would have claimed equal independence for what in his own view its execution might require; and in truth this fairly brings us back to the consideration, that it is the purpose and design of the poem which must really bear the brunt of the objection made even to the method of working it out.

Nor is that purpose to be lightly dismissed, because it more concerns the heart than the understanding, and is sentimental rather than philosophical. The accumulation of wealth has *not* brought about man's diminution, nor is trade's proud empire threatened with decay: but too eager are the triumphs of both, to be always conscious of evils attendant on even the benefits they bring; and of those it was the poet's purpose to remind us. The lesson can never be thrown away. No material prosperity can be so great, but that underneath it, and indeed because of it, will not still be found much suffering and sadness; much to remember that is commonly forgotten, much to attend to that is almost always neglected. Trade would not thrive the less, though shortened somewhat of its unfeeling train; nor wealth enjoy fewer blessings, if its unwieldy pomp less often spurned the cottage from the green. "It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in one's country," said the Lord Leicester who built Holkham, when complimented on the completion of that princely dwelling. "I look round, not a house is to be seen but mine. I am the giant of Giant-castle, and have eaten up all my neighbours."\* There is no man who has risen upward in the world, even by ways the most honourable to himself

"Munster; but by joining the two, he has produced something which never was and never will be seen in any part of the world." *Biog. Ess.* 65.

\* When asked who was his nearest neighbour, he replied, "The King of Denmark." *Potter's Observations on the Poor Laws*, quoted in Campbell's *British Poets* (Ed. 1841), 526.

and kindly to others, who may not be said to have a deserted village, sacred to the tenderest and fondest recollections, which it is well that his fancy and his feeling should at times revisit.

1770.  
Æt. 42. → Goldsmith looked into his heart, and wrote. From that great city in which his hard-spent life had been diversified with so much care and toil, he travelled back to the memory of lives more simply passed, of more cheerful labour, of less anxious care, of homely affections and humble joys for which the world and all its successes offer nothing in exchange. There are few things in the range of English poetry more deeply touching than the closing image of these lines, the hunted creature panting to its home !

In all my wanderings round this world of care,  
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—  
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,  
Amid these humble bowers to lay me down;  
To husband out life's taper at the close,  
And keep the flame from wasting, by repose.  
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,  
Amid the swains to show my book-learned skill;  
Around my fire an evening groupe to draw,  
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;  
And, as an hare whom hounds and horns pursue,  
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,  
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,  
Here to return—and die at home at last.\*

That hope is idle for him. Sweet Auburn is no more. But though he finds the scene deserted, for us he peoples it anew; builds up again its ruined haunts, and revives its pure enjoyments; from the glare of crowded cities, their exciting struggles and

\* This thought was continually at his heart. In his hardly less beautiful prose he has said the same thing more than once, for, as I have elsewhere remarked, no one ever borrowed from himself oftener or more unscrupulously than Goldsmith did. "A city like this," he writes in Letter ciii. of the *Citizen of the World*, "is the soil for great virtues and great vices. . . There are no pleasures, sensual or sentimental, which this city does not produce; yet, I know not how, I could not be content to reside here for life. There is something so seducing in that spot in which we first had existence, that nothing but it can please. Whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or wheresoever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity; we long to die in that spot which gave us birth, and in that pleasing expectation find an opiate for every calamity." The poet Waller, too, wished to die "like the stag where he was roused." (*Johnson*, iii. 338.)

palling pleasures, carries us back to the season of natural pastimes and unsophisticated desires; adjures us all to remember, in our several smaller worlds, the vast world of humanity that breathes beyond; shows us that there is nothing too humble <sup>1770.</sup> Æt. 42. for the loftiest and most affecting associations, and that where human joys and interests have been, their memory is sacred for ever!

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,  
 Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,  
 Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,  
 Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,  
 Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,  
 And news much older than their ale went round.  
 Imagination fondly stoops to trace,  
 The parlour splendours of that festive place;  
 The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,  
 The varnished clock that clicked behind the door,  
 The chest contrived a double debt to pay,  
 A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;  
 The pictures placed for ornament and use,  
 The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;  
 The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,  
 With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay,  
 While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,  
 Rang'd o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.  
 Vain transitory splendours! Could not all  
 Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall!  
 Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart  
 An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;  
 Thither no more the peasant shall repair  
 To sweet oblivion of his daily care;  
 No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,  
 No more the wood-man's ballad shall prevail;  
 No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,  
 Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;  
 The host himself no longer shall be found  
 Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;  
 Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,  
 Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.  
 Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,  
 These simple blessings of the lowly train;  
 To me more dear, congenial to my heart,  
 One native charm, than all the gloss of art.

With darker shadows from the terrible and stony truths that are written in the streets of cities, the picture is afterwards completed; and here, too, the poet painted from himself. His own experience,



the suffering for which his heart had always bled, the misery his scanty purse was always ready to relieve, are in his contrast of the pleasures of the great with the innocence and the health too often murdered to obtain them. It was this sympathy <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> with the very poor, strongly underlying the most part of all he wrote, though seldom appearing on the surface in any formal political opinion, which seems to have struck his more observing critics as the master-peculiarity in his modes and tendencies of thinking ; and hence it may have been that the impression of him, formed in the girlhood of the daughter of his attached friend, Lord Clare, often repeated in her advanced age to her son, Lord Nugent, and by him communicated to me, was "that he was a strong republican in principle, and would have been a very dangerous writer if he had lived to the times of the French revolution." Nor is it difficult to understand how such thoughts and fears came in such quarters to be connected with him, if we merely observe, to take an instance from one of his later books \* in addition to others already named, the uncompromising tone of opinion he doubtless

\* *Animated Nature* (iv. 158). He is speaking of the partridge, and remarks of it that "it is still a favourite delicacy at the tables of the rich : and the desire of keeping it to themselves has induced them to make laws for its preservation, no way harmonising with the general spirit of English legislation. What can be more arbitrary than to talk of preserving the game ; which, when defined, means no more than that the poor shall abstain from what the rich have taken a fancy to keep for themselves ? If these birds could, like a cock or hen, be made legal property ; could they be taught to keep within certain districts, and only fed on those grounds that belong to the man whose entertainments they improve ; it then might, with some show of justice, be admitted, that as a man fed them, so he might claim them. But this is not the case ; nor is it in any man's power to lay a restraint upon the liberty of these birds, that, when let loose, put no limits to their excursions. They feed everywhere, upon every man's ground ; and no man can say, These birds are fed only by me. Those birds which are nourished by all, belong to all ; nor can any one man, nor any set of men, lay claim to them, when still continuing in a state of nature. I never walked out about the environs of Paris, that I did not consider that the immense quantity of game that was running almost tame on every side of me, as a badge of the slavery of the people ; and what they wished me to observe as an object of triumph, I always regarded with a kind of secret compassion : yet these people have no game-laws for the remoter parts of the kingdom ; the game is only preserved in a few places for the king, and is free in most places else. In England, the prohibition is general ; and the peasant has not a right to what even slaves, as he is taught to call them, are found to possess."

never hesitated to indulge, at Lord Clare's table or wherever he might be, on such a subject as the game-laws. It is certain, with reference to the lines I am about to quote, that several "dis-  
 "tinguished friends" strongly objected to the views implied <sup>1770.</sup>  
 in them; but he let them stand. They would perhaps as <sup>Æt. 42.</sup>  
 strongly have objected to what was not uncommon with himself, the abandoning his rest at night to give relief to the destitute. They would have thought the parish should have done what a yet more distinguished friend, Samuel Johnson, once did, and which will probably be remembered when all he wrote or said shall have passed away: his picking up a wretched ruined girl, who lay exhausted on the pavement, "in the lowest state of vice, poverty, and disease;" taking her upon his back, carrying her to his house, and placing her in his bed; not harshly upbraiding her; taking care of her, with all tenderness, for a long time; and endeavouring, on her restoration to health, to put her in a virtuous way of living.\*

Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade;  
 There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;  
 Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,  
 There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.  
 The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,  
 Here, richly deckt, admits the gorgeous train;  
 Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,  
 The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.  
 Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy  
 Sure these denote one universal joy!  
 Are these thy serious thoughts?—Ah, turn thine eyes  
 Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.  
 She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,  
 Has wept at tales of innocence distress;  
 Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,  
 Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn.  
 Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,  
 Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,  
 And pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,  
 With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour  
 When idly first, ambitious of the town,  
 She left her wheel, and robes of country brown.

Beautifully is it said by Mr. Campbell, that "fiction in poetry  
 "is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanted resem-  
 "blance; and this ideal beauty of nature has seldom been united

\* *Boswell*, viii. 323-4.

“with so much sober fidelity, as in the groups and scenery of the *Deserted Village*.” It is to be added that everything in it is English, the feeling, incidents, descriptions, and allusions; and <sup>1770.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 42.</sup> that this consideration may save us needless trouble in seeking to identify sweet Auburn (a name he obtained from Langton) with Lissoy. Scenes of the poet's youth had doubtless risen in his memory as he wrote, mingling with, and taking altered hue from, later experiences; thoughts of those early days could scarcely have been absent from the wish for a quiet close to the struggles and toil of his mature life, and very possibly, nay almost certainly, when the dream of such a retirement haunted him, Lissoy formed part of the vision; it is even possible he may have caught the first hint of his design from a local Westmeath poet and schoolmaster,\* who, in his youth, had given rhymed utterance to the old tenant grievances of the Irish rural population; nor could complaints that were also loudest in those boyish days at Lissoy, of certain reckless and unsparing evictions by which one General Naper (Napper, or Napier) had persisted in improving his estate, have passed altogether from Goldsmith's memory.† But there was no-

\* Lawrence Whyte: who published (1741) a poem in whose list of subscribers appears Allan Ramsay's name, which describes with some pathos the sufferings of dispossessed Irish tenantry.

“Their native soil were forc'd to quit,  
So Irish landlords thought it fit. . . .  
How many villages they razed,  
How many parishes laid waste!”

† The earliest and most intelligent attempt to identify Lissoy and Auburn was made in 1807 by Dr. Streat, Henry Goldsmith's successor in the curacy of Kilkenny-west, but, at the time he wrote this letter, perpetual curate of Athlone. I quote it as the first and best outline of all that has since been very elaborately and very needlessly said on the same subject: “The poem of the *Deserted Village* took its origin from the circumstance of General Robert Napper (the grandfather of the gentleman who now lives in the house, within half a mile of Lissoy, and built by the general) having purchased an extensive tract of the country surrounding Lissoy, or Auburn; in consequence of which many families, here called cottiers, were removed, to make room for the intended improvements of what was now to become the wide domain of a rich man, warm with the idea of changing the face of his new acquisition; and were forced, ‘with fainting steps,’ to go in search of ‘torrid tracts’ and ‘distant climes.’ This fact alone might be sufficient to establish

thing local in his present aim ; or if there was, it was the rustic life and rural scenery of England. It is quite natural that Irish enthusiasts should have found out the fence, the furze, the thorn, the decent church, the never-failing brook, the busy mill, even the Twelve Good Rules, and the Royal Game of Goose.\*

1770.  
Æt. 42.

"the seat of the poem ; but there cannot remain a doubt in any unprejudiced mind  
"when the following are added ; namely : The character of the village-preacher,  
"the above-named Henry, is copied from nature. He is described exactly as he  
"lived ; and his 'modest mansion' as it existed. Burn, the name of the village-  
"master, and the site of his school-house ; and Catherine Giraghty, a lonely widow,

'The wretched matron, forc'd in age for bread  
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread ;'

"(and to this day the brook and ditches near the spot where her cabin stood abound  
"with cresses) ; still remain in the memory of the inhabitants, and Catherine's  
"children live in the neighbourhood. The pool, the busy mill, the house where  
"nut-brown draughts inspired, are still visited as the poetic scene : and the 'haw-  
"thorn-bush,' growing in an open space in front of the house, which I knew to  
"have three trunks, is now reduced to one ; the other two having been cut, from time  
"to time, by persons carrying pieces of it away to be made into toys, &c. in honour  
"of the bard and of the celebrity of his poem. All these contribute to the same  
"proof ; and the 'decent church,' which I attended for upwards of eighteen years,  
"and which 'tops the neighbouring hill,' is exactly described as seen from Lissoy  
"the residence of the preacher." Dr. Streat to the Rev. Edward Mangin, writing  
from the Glebe, Athlone, on Dec. 31, 1807. *Essay on Light Reading*, 140-143.

\* "A lady from the neighbourhood of Portglenone, in the county of Antrim, was  
"one of those who visited the Deserted Village in the summer of 1817 ; and was  
"fortunate enough to find, in a cottage adjoining the ale-house, an old smoked print,  
"which she was credibly informed was the identical Twelve Good Rules that had  
"ornamented that rural tavern, with the Royal Game of Goose, &c. &c. when Gold-  
"smith drew his fascinating description of it." *Gent. Mag.* (1818), lxxxviii. 20.  
The "identical" old smoked print was doubtless Mr. Hogan's. "When I settled on  
"the spot," said that gentleman, giving account of what he had done, to a public  
meeting held in Ballymahon in 1819 to set on foot a subscription for a monument  
to Goldsmith's memory, "I attempted to replace some of the almost forgotten  
"identities that delighted me forty years since. I rebuilt his Three Jolly Pigeons,  
"restored his Twelve Good Rules and Royal Game of Goose, inclosed his Hawthorn  
"Tree, now almost cut away by the devotion of the literary pilgrims who resort  
"to it ; I also planted his favourite hill before Lissoy Gate," &c. &c. *Gent. Mag.*  
(1820), xc. 618-622. The proposed monument failed, notwithstanding the honour-  
able enthusiasm of Mr. Hogan, the Rev. John Graham, its originator, and others. I  
may add that soon after Mr. Hogan began his restorations, an intelligent visitor  
described them ; and nothing, he said, so shook his faith in the reality of Auburn as  
the got-up print, the fixed tea-cups, and so forth. But what had once been Charles  
and Henry Goldsmith's parsonage at Lissoy, the lower chamber of which he found  
inhabited by pigs and sheep and the drawing-room by oats, was yet so placed in  
relation to objects described in the poem, as somewhat to restore his shaken belief.  
He adds, that, in the cabin of the quondam schoolmaster, an oak chair with a back



It was to be expected that pilgrims should have borne away every vestige of the first hawthorn they could lay their hands on. It was very graceful and pretty amusement for Mr. Hogan when he <sup>1770.</sup> settled in the neighbourhood, to rebuild the village inn, and, for <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> security against the enthusiasm of predatory pilgrims, to fix in the wall "the broken tea-cups wisely kept for show"; to fence round with masonry what still remained of the hawthorn; to prop up the tottering walls of what was once the parish school; and to christen his furbished-up village and adjoining mansion by the name of Anburn. All this, as Walter Scott has said, "is a pleasing tribute to the poet in the land of his fathers;"\* but it certainly is no more.

Such tribute as the poem itself was, its author offered to Sir Joshua Reynolds, dedicating it to him in a few words that are very beautiful.† "Setting interest aside," he wrote, "to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this Poem to you." How gratefully this was received, and how strongly it cemented

and seat of cane, purporting to be "the chair of the poet," was shown him, apparently kept "rather for the sake of drawing contributions from the curious than from any reverence for the bard. There is," he humorously adds, "no fear of its being worn out by the devout earnestness of sitters, as the cocks and hens have usurped undisputed possession of it, and protest most clamorously against all attempts to get it cleansed, or to seat oneself." Appendix to vol. iv. of the Edinburgh edition of Goldsmith's *Works* (1836), 317-18. A very careful and good little book. Its editor, I believe, was Mr. Hamilton Buchanan.

\* Colman the younger has recorded a more extraordinary tribute in the land of his adoption. "One day I met the poet Harding at Oxford, a half-crazy creature as poets generally are, with a huge broken brick, and some bits of thatch upon the crown of his hat. On my asking him for a solution of this Prosopopeia, 'Sir,' said he, 'to-day is the anniversary of the celebrated Dr. Goldsmith's death, and I am now in the character of his *Deserted Village*.'" *Ran. Records*, i. 307.

† A resemblance has been pointed out (Tiffin's *Gossip about Portraits*, 1866, p. 87) between this touching inscription and Bacon's dedication of his *Essays* to Sir John Constable. "My last Essays I dedicated to my deare brother Master Anthony Bacon. . . Missing my brother, I found you next." Comparing the two in their complete form, however, the similarity is seen to be merely accidental; and in nothing, it may be remarked, was Goldsmith happier than in all his dedications.

an already fast friendship, needs not be said. The great painter could not rest till he had made public acknowledgment and return. He painted his picture of *Resignation*, had it engraved by Thomas Watson, and inscribed upon it these words: "This <sup>1770.</sup> attempt to express a character in the *Deserted Village* is dedi- <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> cated to Doctor Goldsmith, by his sincere friend and admirer, Joshua Reynolds." Nor were tributes to the poet's growing popularity wanting from foreign admirers. Within two years from its publication the first foreign translation appeared, and obtained grateful recognition under Goldsmith's hand.\*

What Griffin paid for the poem is very doubtful. Glover first tells, and Cooke repeats with additions, the story which Walter Scott also believed and repeated, that he had stipulated for a hundred pounds as the price, and returned part of it on some one telling him that five shillings a couplet was more than any poetry ever written was worth, and could only ruin the poor bookseller who gave it; † but this is by no means credible, though a good authority tells us it would have been "quite in character. ‡ Not only in itself is it highly incredible, but it is perhaps of all possible speeches the very last that a man is likely to have made, who only a few weeks before had not scrupled to take 500 guineas from the same publisher, on the mere faith of a book which he had hardly even begun to write. It is presumable, however, that the sum actually paid was small; and that it was not without reason he told Lord Lisburn, on receiving complimentary inquiries after a new poem at the Academy dinner, "I cannot afford to court the draggle-tail muses, my Lord, they would let me starve; but by my other labours I

\* This was not the translation mentioned by Lord Holland to Thomas Moore. Lord Holland mentioned a translation of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* by a "foreigner, whom I remember in London, called the Commandeur de Tilly, and the 'line 'As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away,' was done 'Comme la mer détruit 'les travaux de la taupe.'" Thomas Moore's *Diary*, Dec. 30, 1818. Goethe tried his hand at a translation into German, as we have seen, but did not please himself.

† *Poems*. Malone's Dublin Ed. (1777), vi. *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 172. "In truth," replied Goldsmith, according to Glover's version, "I think so too; it is much more "than the honest man can afford, or the piece is worth; I have not been easy since "I received it; I will therefore go back and return him his note."

‡ *Percy Memoir*, 85.

"can make shift to eat, and drink, and have good clothes."\* Something to the same effect, indeed, in the poem itself, had mightily stirred the comment and curiosity of the critics.

1770.  
Æt. 42. They called them excellent but "alarming lines."

And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,  
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;  
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,  
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;  
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,  
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;  
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,  
That fonn'd'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;  
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,  
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!

Apollo and the Muses forbid! was the general cry of the reviews. What! shall the writer of such a poem as this, "the subject of a "young and generous king, who loves, cherishes and understands "the fine arts,"† shall *he* be obliged to drudge for booksellers, shall *he* be starved into abandonment of poetry? Even so. There was no help for it; and truly it became him to be grateful that there were booksellers to drudge for. "The poverty of authors "is a common observation, but not always a true one. No author "can be poor who understands the arts of booksellers. Without "this necessary knowledge, the greatest genius may starve; and "with it, the greatest dunce live in splendour. This knowledge I "have pretty well dipped into."‡ Thus, in this very month of

\* *Life* prefixed to Bewick's edition of the *Poems* (Gloucester, 1809), 11. The incident is also related in a number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* of earlier date, but I have lost the reference.

† Letter in the *St. James's Chronicle*, dated from Oxford on the 12th July, and signed J B, ending with some verses which the writer calls the "overflowing of "his mind on the occasion," so very execrable that the credit of them has been given to Boswell.

‡ So Chatterton, in a letter to his mother. Poor fellow! one cannot quote it, still vibrating in every word with its writer's irrepressible hopes, and not feel a sickness of pain at the heart! "I am settled, and in such a settlement as I would desire. I get "four guineas a month by one Magazine: shall engage to write a History of England "and other pieces, which will more than double that sum. Occasional essays for the "daily papers would more than support me. What a glorious prospect! . . . I am "quite familiar at the Chapter coffee-house, and know all the geniuses there. A "character is now unnecessary; an author carries his character in his pen. My

May 1770, the most eager young aspirant for literary fame that ever trod the flinty streets of London, poor Chatterton, was writing home to his country friends. But, alas ! *his* lip was not wetted with the knowledge which he fancied he had dipped so deep <sup>1770.</sup> into. With Goldsmith it was otherwise. He had drunk long <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> and weary draughts, had tasted alike the sweetness and the bitterness of the cup, and, no longer sanguine or ambitious, had yet reason to confess himself not wholly discontented. In many cases it is better to want than to have, and in almost all it is better to want than to ask. At the least, he *could* make shift, as he said to Lord Lisburn, to eat, and drink, and have good clothes. The days which had now come to him were not splendid, but neither were they starving days ; and they had also brought him such respectful hearing, that, of what his really starving days had been, he could now dare to speak out; in the hope of saving others.\* He lost no opportunity of doing it. Not even to his *Natural History* did he turn, without venting upon this sorrowful theme, in sentences that sounded strangely amid his talk of beasts and birds, what lay so near his heart. “The lower race of animals, when satisfied, for “the instant moment are perfectly happy ; but it is otherwise

“sister will improve herself in drawing. My grandmother is, I hope, well. Bristol’s “mercenary walls were never destined to hold me—there, I was out of my element : “now I am in it—LONDON ! Good God !—how superior is London to that despicable “place Bristol !” *Works* (Ed. Cambridge, 1842), ii. 712-13.

\* His old friend and rival, Kelly, who had been already for some months a hack-writer for the ministry, was now struggling hard to get a pension from Lord North ; and an unpublished letter of his, written at this time, and acknowledging gratefully Garrick’s warm assistance, lies before me. It overflows with praise ; yet one reads it with an uneasy feeling that such services as it thanks Garrick for, might better have been given by him to higher and worthier recipients. Certainly the letter is a strange contrast to all that have been preserved out of the correspondence of Garrick and Goldsmith. “Wednesday, 12th Sept. 1770. This day, and not before, I have “got some certain intimation of Lord North’s intention to do handsome things. “Mr. Cooper told me of it in very obliging terms, adding that what I had done was “very much approved, and that you were highly my friend. The first part of the “Intelligence agreeably surprised me, the latter did not in the least ; Garrick I have “long known as another term for all the virtues, and instead of being amazed at his “readiness to serve the unfriended, I should be actually amazed if his generosity “had not found that readiness a very considerable satisfaction. Accept my best “acknowledgments, my dear sir, for all your goodness to me.”



"with man. His mind anticipates distress, and feels the pang of  
 "want even before it arrests him. Thus the mind being conti-

"nually harassed by the situation, it at length influences the  
 1770.  
 1770. "constitution, and unfits it for all its functions. Some cruel

Æt. 42. "disorder, but no way like hunger, seizes the unhappy suf-

"ferer; so that almost all those men who have thus long lived by

"chance, and whose every day may be considered as an happy

"escape from famine, are known at last to die, in reality of a dis-

"order caused by hunger, but which, in the common language, is

"often called a broken heart. Some of these I have known myself,

"when very little able to relieve them; and I have been told, by a

"very active and worthy magistrate, that the number of such as die

"in London for want, is much greater than one would imagine—I

"think he talked of two thousand in a year."\* If this was

already written, as from what he afterwards told Langton we may

infer some portions of the *Animated Nature* to have been, Gold-

smith little imagined the immortal name which was now to be

added to the melancholy list. The writer of the sanguine letter I

have quoted was doomed to be the next victim. He had not been

in London many days, at the time when he so supposed he had

mastered the booksellers; and in little less than three months

after sending those hopeful tidings home, he yielded up his brain to

the terrible disorder of which Goldsmith had seen so much: so un-

like hunger, though hunger-bred. Gallantly had he worked in those

three momentous months:† had projected histories of England, and

\* *Animated Nature*, ii. 6-7.

† The language contains few things more affecting than the brief letters left by Chatterton, though as compositions they have no merit. I subjoin a few extracts. On the 26th of April, 1770, he writes to his "dear Mother:" "Here I am, safe, and in high spirits. Got into London about five o'clock in the evening—called upon Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Fell, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Dodsley. Great encouragement from them; all approved of my design;—shall soon be settled." On the 6th of May he writes to his "dear Mother" from Shoreditch the letter already quoted (210), to which he adds, "I have some trifling presents for mother, sister," &c. On the 14th of May he writes: "I am invited to treat with a Doctor of Music, on the footing of a composer, for Ranelagh and the Gardens. Bravo, hey boys, up we go! Let my sister improve in copying music, and in drawing," &c. On the 30th of May he writes from "Tom's coffee-house" to his "dear Sister:" "I will send you two silks this summer; and expect, in answer to this, what colours you prefer. My mother

voluminous histories of London ; had written for *Magazines*, *Registers*, and *Museums* endless, the *London*, the *Town and Country*, the *Middlesex Freeholders*’, the *Court and City* ; had composed a musical burlesque burletta ; had launched into politics on both sides ; had contributed sixteen songs for ten and sixpence ; had received gladly two shillings for an article ; had lived on a half-penny roll, or a penny tart and a glass of water a day, enjoying now and then a sheep’s tongue ; had invented all the while brave letters about his happiness and success to the only creatures that loved him, his grandmother, mother, and sister at Bristol ; had even sent them, out of his so many daily pence, bits of china, fans, and a gown ; and then, one fatal morning, after many bitter disappointments (one of them precisely what Goldsmith had himself undergone in as desperate distress, just as one of his expedients for escape, by “going abroad as a surgeon,” had been also what Goldsmith tried), having passed some three days without food and refused his poor landlady’s invitation to dinner, he was found dead in his miserable room, the floor thickly strewn with scraps of the manuscripts he had destroyed, a pocket-book memorandum lying near him to the effect that the booksellers owed him eleven pounds,

“shall not be forgotten. My employment will be in writing a voluminous *History of London* . . as this will not, like writing political essays, oblige me to go to the “coffee-house, I shall be able to serve you the more by it.” On the 19th of June he writes to his mother. “I send you in the box, six cups and saucers with two “basins for my sister. If a China tea-pot and cream-pot is in your opinion necessary, “I will send them . . Two fans—the silver one is more grave than the other, which “would suit my sister best. But that I leave to you both.” He was now lodging at Mrs. Angel’s the sack-maker, in Brook-street, Holborn. From that place, on the 20th of July, he again writes to his sister. “I am now about an *Oratorio*, which, when “finished, will purchase you a gown.” On the 12th of August he writes to Mr. Catcott. “I intend going abroad as a surgeon. Mr. Barrett has it in his power to assist me “greatly, by his giving me a physical character. I hope he will. I trouble you with “a copy of an *Essay* I intend publishing.” These were the last thoughts which connected him with life or its hopes, and they were precisely what had visited Goldsmith in an only less sore extremity. He wished to escape as a surgeon to the coast of Africa, and to help himself to go by means of an essay he had written. But it was not to be. Exactly twelve days after the date of this letter he was found dead in his wretched lodging. (For an amusing account of the way in which Catcott, here named, attended on Johnson and Boswell at their visit to Bristol, see *Boswell*, vi. 171-3.)

and the cup which had held arsenic and water still grasped in his hand. It was in a wretched little street out of Holborn; the body was taken to the bone-house of St. Andrew's, but no one came to claim it; and in due time the pauper-burial-ground of Shoe-lane received what remained of Chatterton.

<sup>1770.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 42.</sup>

“The marvellous boy! The sleepless soul who perished in his “pride!” He was not eighteen.

The tragedy had been all acted out before Goldsmith heard of any of its incidents. I am even glad to think, that, during the whole of the month which preceded the catastrophe, he was absent from England.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## A VISIT TO PARIS.

1770.

GOLDSMITH had quitted London on a visit to Paris in the middle of July. "The Professor of History," writes Mary Moser, the daughter of the keeper of the Academy, telling Fuseli at Rome how disappointed the literary people connected with the new institution had been not to receive diplomas of membership like the painters, "is comforted by the success of his *Deserted Village*, which is a very pretty poem, and has lately "put himself under the conduct of Mrs. Horneck and her fair daughters, and is gone to France; and Doctor Johnson sips his "tea, and cares not for the vanity of the world."\* Goldsmith himself, with most pleasant humour, has described in a letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds what happened to the party up to their lodgment in Calais, at the Hôtel d'Angleterre. They had not arrived many hours when he sent over this fragment of a despatch, to satisfy Reynolds merely of the safe arrival of Mrs. Horneck, the young ladies, and himself: "My dear Friend," he wrote, "We "had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely "sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened, as my machine "to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were glad to "leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in "high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told that a

\* Knowles's *Life of Fuseli*, i. 36.



“little money would go a great way. Upon landing two little  
 “trunks, which was all we carried with us, we were surprised to  
 “see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the  
 1770. “ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each  
 Æt. 42. “trunk, the rest surrounded, and held the hasps; and in  
 “this manner our little baggage was conducted, with a kind



“of funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the custom-  
 “house. We were well enough pleased with the people's civility  
 “till they came to be paid: when every creature that had the  
 “happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger, expected  
 “sixpence; and had so pretty civil a manner of demanding it,  
 “that there was no refusing them. When we had done with the

“porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers, who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the “Hôtel d’Angleterre, where a valet de place came to offer his “service; and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out <sup>1770.</sup> “that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> “service, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, “and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another “circumstance. I bought a new ribbon for my wig at Canter- “bury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain sixpence “by buying me a new one.” \*

This was not a very promising beginning; but the party, continuing to carry with them the national enjoyment of scolding everything they met with, passed on through Flanders, and to Paris by way of Lisle. The latter city was the scene of an incident afterwards absurdly misrelated. Standing at the window of their hotel to see a company of soldiers in the square, the beauty of the sisters Horneck drew such marked admiration, that Goldsmith, heightening his drollery with that air of solemnity so generally a point in his humour and so often more solemnly misinterpreted, turned off from the window with the remark that elsewhere *he*, too, could have his admirers. The Jessamy Bride, Mrs. Gwyn, was asked about the occurrence not many years ago; remembered it as a playful jest; and said how shocked she had subsequently been “to see it adduced in print as a proof of his envious disposition.” The readers of Boswell will remember that it is so related by him. “When accompanying two beautiful young ladies with their mother “on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention “was paid to them than to him!” †

\* This delightful fragment of a letter was first printed in the *Percy Memoir*, 90-91.

† *Life of Johnson*, ii. 191. Northcote, with less excuse, has repeated it (*Life of Reynolds*, i. 250); but in later years he apologised for having too hastily done so, having since been better informed by Mrs. Gwyn. And see Moore’s *Diary*, vi. 114-15. On the other hand, Mr. Croker, who had received from Mrs. Gwyn some notes for his *Boswell*, is careful to remind us that “the good-natured construction “which the kind old lady was willing, after a lapse of above sixty years, to put on “Goldsmith’s behaviour, she did not express in her previous communication with

At Lisle another letter to Reynolds was begun, but laid aside, because everything they had seen was so dull that the description would not be worth reading. Nor had matters much improved <sup>1770.</sup> when they got to Paris. Alas! Goldsmith had discovered a <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> change in *himself* since he traversed those scenes with only his youth and his poverty for companions. Lying in a barn was no disaster then. Then, there were no postillions to quarrel with, no landladies to be cheated by, no silk coat to tempt him into making himself look like a fool. The world was his oyster in those days, which with his flute he opened. He expressed all this very plainly in a letter to Reynolds soon after their arrival, dated from Paris on the 29th of July. He is anxious to get back to what Gibbon, when he became a member of the Club, called the relish of manly conversation and the society of the brown table. He is getting nervous about his arrears of work. He dares not think of another holiday yet, though Reynolds had proposed, on his return, a joint excursion into Devonshire. He is already planning new labour. He is even thinking of another comedy; and therefore glad that Colman's suit in chancery has ended in confirming his right as acting manager (the whole quarrel was made up the following year by Mr. Harris's quarrel with Mrs. Lessingham). But here is the letter, as printed from the original in possession of Mr. Singer; and how pleasant are its little references to those weaknesses of his own which he well knew had never such kindly interpretation as from Reynolds, as where he whimsically protests that it never can be natural in himself to be stupid, where he reports himself saying as a good thing a thing which was not understood, and where he describes the silk coat he has purchased which makes him look like a fool!

"MY DEAR FRIEND, I began a long letter to you from Lisle giving a description of all that we had done and seen, but finding it very dull, and knowing that you would show it again, I threw it aside and it was lost. You see by the top of this letter that we are at Paris, and (as I have often heard you say) we have brought

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"me, though it had afforded so obvious an opportunity of correcting the alleged 'injustice; and after all, it can be only matter of opinion whether the vexation so 'seriously exhibited by Goldsmith was real or assumed.'" 140. See *post*, chap. xii.



our own amusement with us, for the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have yet seen.

"With regard to myself I find that travelling at twenty and at forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me, and can find <sup>1770.</sup> nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. One of our chief <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> amusements here is scolding at every thing we meet with, and praising every thing and every person we left at home.\* You may judge therefore whether your name is not frequently bandied at table among us. To tell you the truth I never thought I could regret your absence so much as our various mortifications on the road have often taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number, of our lying in barns, and of my being half-poisoned with a dish of green peas, of our quarrelling with postilions and being cheated by our landladies, but I reserve all this for an happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return.

"I have little to tell you more but that we are at present all well, and expect returning when we have staid out one month, which I should not care if it were over this very day. I long to hear from you all: how you yourself do, how Johnson, Burke, Dyer, Chamier, Colman, and every one of the club do. I wish I could send you some amusement in this letter, but I protest I am so stupified by the air of this country (for I am sure it can never be natural) that I have not a word to say. I have been thinking of the plot of a comedy which shall be entitled *A Journey to Paris*, in which a family shall be introduced with a full intention of going to France to save money. You know there is not a place in the world more promising for that purpose. As for the meat of this country I can scarce eat it, and though we pay two good shillings an head for our dinner, I find it all so tough, that I have spent less time with my knife than my pick-tooth. I said this as a good thing at table, but it was not understood. I believe it to be a good thing.

"As for our intended journey to Devonshire I find it out of my power to perform it, for, as soon as I arrive at Dover I intend to let the ladies go on, and I will take a country lodging somewhere near that place in order to do some business. I have so outrun the constable, that I must mortify a little to bring it up again. For God's sake the night you receive this take your pen in your hand and tell me something about yourself, and *myself*, if you know of any thing that has happened. About Miss Reynolds, about Mr. Bickerstaff, my nephew, or any body that you regard. I beg you will send to Griffin the bookseller to know if there be any letters left for me, and be so good as to send them to me at Paris. They may perhaps be left for me at the porter's lodge opposite the pump in Temple-lane. The same messenger will do. I expect one from Lord Clare from Ireland. As for others I am not much uneasy about [them].†

"Is there any thing I can do for you at Paris? I wish you would tell me. The whole of my own purchases here, is one silk coat which I have put on, and which makes me look like a fool. But no more of that. I find that Colman has gained his lawsuit. I am glad of it. I suppose you often meet. I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say, that if anything could make France pleasant, the very good women with

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\* The same opinion, more forcibly, he expressed later at Ridge's table (the "Anchovy" of *Retaliation*) when, being asked if he would recommend travel, he said yes, he would by all means recommend it, to the rich if they were without the sense of smelling, and to the poor if they were without the sense of feeling.

† Yet from one of them he was to learn his mother's death.



whom I am at present would certainly do it. I could say more about that, but I intend showing them this letter before I send it away. What signifies teasing you longer with moral observations when the business of my writing is over. I

1770. have one thing only more to say, and of that I think every hour in the day,  
Æt. 42. namely, that I am your

"Most sincere and most affectionate friend,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Direct to me at the Hôtel de Danemarc,

"Rue Jacob, Fauxbourg St. Germain."

Little more is to be added of this excursion. It was not made more agreeable to Goldsmith by an unexpected addition to the party in the person of Mr. Hickey (the "special attorney" who is niched into *Retaliation*),\* who joined them at Paris, and whose habit of somewhat coarse raillery was apt to be indulged too freely at Goldsmith's expense. One of the stories Hickey told on his return, however, seems to have been true enough. Goldsmith sturdily maintained that a certain distance from one of the fountains at Versailles was within reach of a leap, and tumbled into the water in his attempt to establish that position. He also made his friends smile by protesting that all the French parrots he had heard spoke such capital French that he understood them perfectly, whereas an English parrot, talking his own native Irish, was quite unintelligible to him.† It was also told of him, in

\* "He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper;  
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper. . . .  
Then what was his failing? come, tell it, and burn ye—  
He was, could he help it? a special attorney."

The profession in those days failed to enjoy the esteem which its worthier members have since attracted to it. "Much inquiry having been made concerning a gentleman who had quitted a company where Johnson was, and no information being obtained, at last Johnson observed that he did not care to speak ill of any man behind his back, but he believed the gentleman was an attorney." Maxwell's *Collectanea*, in *Boswell*, iii. 141. Mrs. Piozzi relates the same incident (*Anecdotes*, 272), and adds that though Johnson did not encourage general satire, he was not at all displeased to be reminded of this instance of indulgence in it.

† For grave reasoning in support of this proposition, see *Animated Nature*, iv. 217. "I was at first for ascribing it to the different qualities of the two languages, and was for entering into an elaborate discussion on the vowels and consonants; but a friend that was with me solved the difficulty at once, by assuring me that the French women scarcely did anything else the whole day than sit and instruct their feathered pupils; and that the birds were thus distinct in their lessons in consequence of continual schooling."

proof of his oddity, that on Mrs. Horneck desiring him more than once, when they had no place of Protestant worship to attend, to read them the morning service, his uniform answer was, "I should be happy to oblige you, my dear madam, but in <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> "truth I do not think myself good enough." This, however, we may presume to think perhaps less eccentric than his friends supposed it to be.

Goldsmith did not stay in Dover as he had proposed. He brought the ladies to London. Among the letters forwarded to him in Paris had been an announcement of his mother's death. Dead to any consciousness or enjoyment of life, she had for some time been; blind, and otherwise infirm; and hardly could the event have been unexpected by him, or by any one. Yet are there few, however early tumbled out upon the world, to whom the world has been able to give any substitute for that earliest friend. Not less true than affecting is the saying in one of Gray's letters: "I have discovered a thing very little known, which is, "that in one's whole life one never can have any more than a "single mother."\* The story (which Northcote tells) that would attribute to Goldsmith the silly slight of appearing in half-

\* It touches a deeper sentiment than the same thought in *Herodotus*, which prompts the choice of the brother before even husband or children, the parents being dead. \*Ω βασιλεῦ, ἀνὴρ μὲν μοι ἂν ἄλλος γένοιτω, εἰ δαίμων ἐθέλοι, καὶ τέκνα ἄλλα, εἰ ταῦτα ἀποβάλοιμι· πατὴρ δὲ καὶ μητὴρ οὐκ ἔτι μιν ζώντων, ἀδελφεὸς δὲ ἂν ἄλλος οὐδενὶ τρόπῳ γένοιτο· ταύτῃ τῇ γνώμῃ χρωμένη, ἔλεξα ταῦτα. *Herodoti Thalía*, cxix. (Ed. Schweighæuser, i. 261.) So, too, our First Edward, when he grieved less for his son's than for his father's death. (*Hume*, chap. xiii.) Lord Lyttelton writes to me upon this: "There is a passage in Sophocles which I "have long known by heart, evidently copied from this of Herodotus. It is odd that "though I read Herodotus through not long ago, I do not remember observing this "resemblance till now. They are fine lines, and may be worth referring to in a "future edition." The lines are 900—904 of *Antigone*: Ed. Hermann. 1825: where Antigone says that there might be another husband for her if the first died, and, if her child were lost, another from another man: but, her father and her mother being laid in the grave, it was impossible that a brother should ever be born to her.

πόσις μὲν ἂν μοι, καθ' ἀνόντος, ἄλλος ἦν,  
καὶ παῖς ἀπ' ἄλλου φωτός, εἰ τοῦδ' ἤμπλακον·  
μητὴρ δ' ἔν' Αἰδοῦ καὶ πατὴρ κεικευθόσιν,  
οὐκ ἔστ' ἀδελφὸς ὅστις ἂν βλάσται ποτί.

mourning at this time, and explaining it as for a "distant" relation, would not be credible of any man of common sensibility; far less of him.\* Mr. William Filby's bills enable us to speak <sup>1770.</sup> with greater accuracy. As in the instance of his brother's <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> death, they contain an entry of a "suit of mourning," sent home on the 8th of September.†

But indulgence of sorrow is one of the luxuries of the idle; and whatever the loss or grief that might afflict him, the work that waited Goldsmith must be done.

\* "About the year 1770, Dr. Goldsmith lost his mother, who died in Ireland. "On this occasion he immediately dressed himself in a suit of clothes of gray cloth, "trimmed with black, such as commonly is worn for second mourning. When he "appeared the first time after this at Sir Joshua Reynolds's house, Miss F. Reynolds, "the sister of Sir Joshua, asked him whom he had lost, as she saw he wore mourning, "when he answered, a distant relation only; being shy, as I conjecture, to own that "he wore such slight mourning for so near a relative." Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 212.

† See *ante*, 164.

## CHAPTER IX.

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### THE HAUNCH OF VENISON AND GAME OF CHESS.

1770—1771.

EIGHT days after he put on mourning for his mother's death, on the 16th of September, 1770, Goldsmith was signing a fresh agreement with Davies for an *Abridgment* of his Roman History in a duodecimo volume; for making which, "and for putting his <sup>1770.</sup> name thereto," Davies undertook to pay fifty guineas.\* <sup>Æt. 42.</sup> The same worthy bibliopole had published in the summer his *Life of Parnell*, to which I formerly referred. It was lightly and pleasantly written; had some really good remarks on the defects as well as merits of Parnell's translations; and contained that pretty illustration (whereof all who have written biography know the truth as well as beauty), of the difficulty of obtaining, when fame has set its seal on any celebrated man, those personal details of his obscurer days which his contemporaries have not cared to give: "The dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to "continue the chase by the meridian splendour." It also contained remarks on the ornamented schools of poetry, in which allusions, not in the best taste, were levelled against Gray, and less specifically against his old favourite Collins; yet remarks, I must add, of which the principle was sound enough, though pushed, as good principles are apt to be, to an absurd extreme. For, of styles all bristling with epithets, Voltaire himself was not less tolerant than Goldsmith; nor ever with greater zest denounced the adjective, as

\* *Percy Memoir*, 79, note.



the substantive's greatest enemy.\* But merits as well as faults in the Parnell-memoir Tom Davies of course tested by the sale; and with result so satisfactory † that another memoir had at once been engaged for, and now occupied Goldsmith on his return. <sup>1770.</sup> Bolingbroke was the subject selected, for its hot party-interest

\* I fear there is no reasonable ground for doubting that Goldsmith was guilty of the egregious bad taste, which Cradock has recorded, of proposing to improve Gray's *Elegy* by cutting the imagination boldly out of it. "You are so attached," he represents Goldsmith saying, "to Hurd, Gray, and Mason, that you think nothing good can proceed but out of that formal school; now, I'll mend Gray's *Elegy*, by "leaving out an idle word in every line!" "And for me, Doctor, completely spoil it."

"The curfew tolls the knell of day,  
The lowing herd winds o'er the lea;  
The ploughman homeward plods his way,  
And —"

"Enough, enough, I have no ear for more." Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 230. This was certainly carrying out to its most alarming practical extent Voltaire's objection to epithets. "If certain authors could only understand," exclaimed the great Frenchman, "that adjectives are the greatest enemies of substantives, although they "agree in gender, number, and case!" A subtle critic in the *Edinburgh Review* (lxxviii. 205: Lord Lytton has since avowed himself the writer) has on the other hand pointed out that the epithet is often, and in no poet more than Gray, precisely that word in a verse which addresses itself most to the imagination of the reader, and tests most severely that of the author. A good epithet is always an image; which the critic proceeds to illustrate by a line, which, as Shakespeare wrote it, would stand

The gaudy, babbling, and remorseless day;

until a process such as that which Goldsmith applies to the later poet, should amend it into the faultless simplicity of

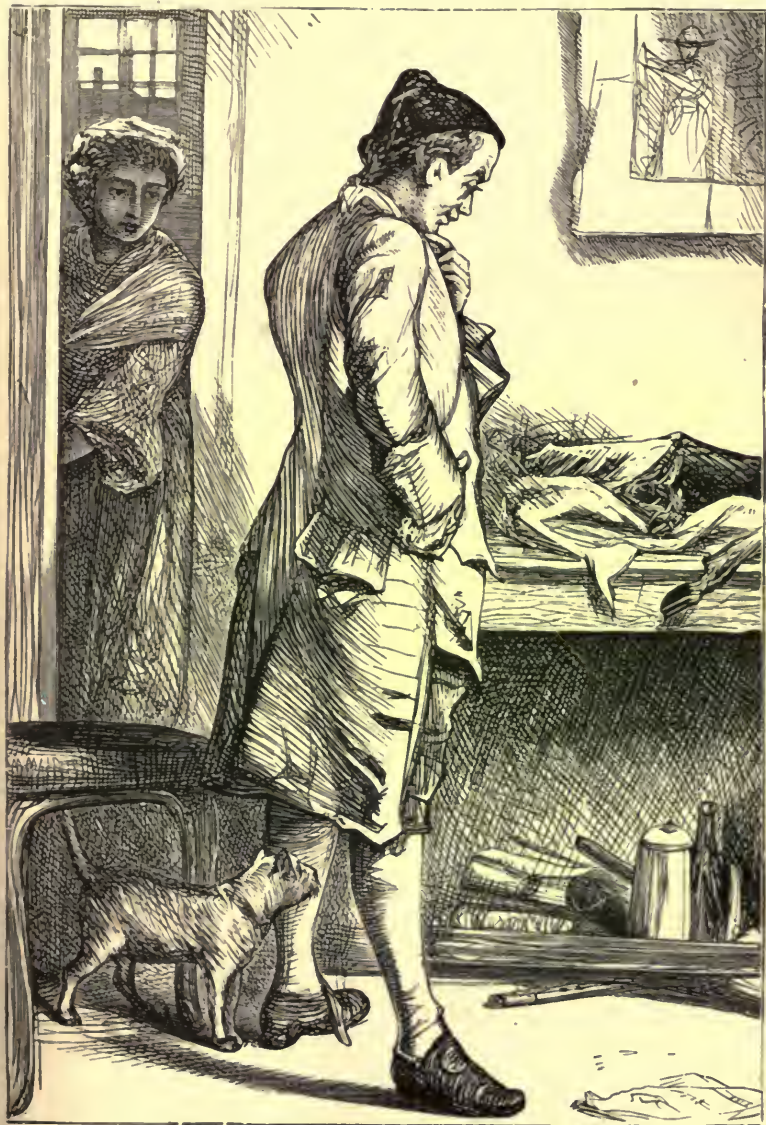
The day!

I am afraid that some meddler had been putting Goldsmith out of humour with the poet of Pembroke-hall, by telling him how meanly Parnell himself was thought of there. He had a sort of family as well as national liking for Parnell, and would be sadly disposed to resent, with even greater injustice in the other extreme, Gray's characterisation of him as "the dunghill of Irish Grub-street." See *Correspondence of Gray and Mason*, 153.

† Nor should I omit to add that other satisfactory result to his own fame which arose from the famous eulogy of Johnson. "The Life of Dr. Parnell is a task which "I should very willingly decline, since it has been lately written by Goldsmith, a "man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always "seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being "minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was "copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness. What such an author has told, who would tell again? I have made an "abstract from his larger narrative; and have this gratification from my attempt, "that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldsmith.

"Τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων."

*Lives of the Poets.* (*Works*, iii. 522.) On the other hand, he remarked to Boswell, on its first appearance: "Goldsmith's Life of Parnell is poor; not that it is poorly



THE HAUNCH OF VENISON.



of course; indeed, the life was to be prefixed to a republication of the *Dissertation on Parties*: but it was not the writer's mode, whatever the bookseller may have wished, to turn a literary memoir into a political pamphlet; and what was written proved <sup>1770.</sup> <sub>Æt. 42.</sub> very harmless that way, with as little in it to concern Lord North as Mr. Wilkes, and of as small interest, it would seem, to the writer as to either. "Doctor Goldsmith is gone with Lord "Clare into the country," writes Davies to Granger, "and I am "plagued to get the proofs from him of his *Life of Lord Bolingbroke*."\* However, he did get them; and the book was published in December. It must be admitted, I fear, that it is but a slovenly piece of writing. The two closing paragraphs, summing up Bolingbroke's character, alone have any pretension to strength or merit of style; and these were so marked an imitation of that Johnsonian manner in which Goldsmith's writing for the most part is singularly deficient, whatever his conversation at times may have been, that the resemblance did not escape his friends of the *Monthly Review*. They closed their bitter onslaught† on the

"written, but that he had poor materials; for nobody can write the life of a man, "but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him." *Life*, iii. 197-8.

\* Granger's *Letters*, 48.

† *Monthly Review*, Feb. 1771, xliv. 108. The amiable Griffiths begins his attack by candidly confessing his gratification at the opportunity afforded him by Goldsmith's book, "of indulging a desire we have long had at heart, of exposing that "false, futile, and slovenly style, which, to the utter neglect of grammatical precision "and purity, disgraces, &c. &c. &c., and no author ever gave a fairer opportunity "of discharging it, than the author of this *Life of Bolingbroke*." To show the delicacy of personal reference with which the so grateful office was discharged, I shall quote, with its comment, one out of the eighteen examples of "false language" laughed at by the critical and tasteful Griffiths. "10. 'Bolingbroke and his wife "'parted by mutual consent, both equally displeased?' Arrah!" The reader will perhaps thank me for closing this note with a specimen of the imitation of Johnson to which I advert in the text. "In this manner lived and died Lord Bolingbroke, "ever active, never depressed, ever pursuing fortune, and as constantly disappointed "by her. In whatever light we view his character, we shall find him an object "rather properer for our wonder than our imitation, more to be feared than esteemed, "and gaining our admiration without our love. His ambition ever aimed at the "summit of power, and nothing seemed capable of satisfying his immoderate desires, "but the liberty of governing all things without a rival. With as much ambition, "as great abilities, and more acquired knowledge than Cæsar, he wanted only his "courage to be as successful: but the schemes his head dictated, his heart often



Bolingbroke biography by broadly, and of course without any other foundation for the slander, insinuating the authorship of

Johnson in these particular passages; "being as much  
<sup>1770.</sup>  
 "superior to the rest of the composition as the style and  
 Æt. 42. "manner of Johnson are to those of his equally pompous but  
 "feeble imitator." It ought perhaps to be added that it was the very rare occasional indulgence in imitative sentences of this kind, and in conversation rather than in books (for its occurrence in the latter is so rare as, except in this single instance, to be hardly discoverable), that doubtless so often caused Goldsmith to be foolishly talked about as belonging to the "Johnsonian school," with which he had absolutely nothing in common.

The charge of using Johnson's hard words in conversation, I may here also remark, already brought against him by Joseph Warton, is much harped upon by Hawkins. "He affected," says that ill-natured gentleman, "Johnson's style and manner of conversation, and, when he had uttered, as he often would, a laboured sentence, so tumid as to be scarce intelligible, would ask, if that "was not truly Johnsonian?"\* Nor has Boswell omitted it: "To me and many others it appeared that he studiously copied the "manner of Johnson, though indeed upon a smaller scale." It is, however, to be observed that the same thing is found said so often, and of so many other people, as for the most part to lose its distinctive or pertinent character. Of Boswell himself it is undoubtedly far more certain than of Goldsmith, that he was ludicrous for this kind of imitation of Johnson.

"refused to execute; and he lost the ability to perform, just when the great occasion called for all his efforts to engage." *Miscellaneous Works*, iii. 424. Passages of this kind formed an attractive theme for satire to the small wits of the day. *Exempli gratia*, thus writes and annotates the satirical author of the *Patron*:

"Goldsmith thus robed assumes a mock command,

And in those regions reigns Johnson at second-hand.

"The puny Doctor tore from the brawny shoulders of Johnson a corner of his "mantle, in which he swath'd himself o'er and o'er." I will close this note by referring to a delightful letter from Burke to Murphy on the dangers attending such a style as Johnson's, to be found in Richard Sharp's *Letters and Essays*, 17.

\* *Life of Johnson*, 416. The subsequent *Boswell* references are ii. 189, vii. 106, viii. 68-9.

Walpole laughs at him for it; Madame D'Arblay highly colours its most comical incidents; and above all we see it in the conversations of his own wonderful book: so that when he proceeds to turn the laugh on Johnson's landlord, little Allen the printer of Bolt-court, for "imitating the stately periods and "slow and solemn utterance of the great man," and on another occasion professes himself "not a little amused by observing Allen perpetually struggling to talk in the manner of Johnson, like the little "frog in the fable blowing himself up to resemble the stately ox," the effect is amazingly absurd. On the whole, though it is by no means unlikely, as has just been said, that Goldsmith, as well as others who looked up to Johnson, may have fallen now and then into unconscious Johnsonianisms, the charge in its deliberate and exaggerated form must rather be regarded as a sort of falling in with a fashionable cant, in vogue more or less against all with whom Johnson was familiar. It is at least indisputable that no trace of the absurd imitation alleged is discoverable, as a habit, in Boswell's reports of Goldsmith's conversations; where, if it existed at all, that reporter must surely have revealed it who was too truthful to suppress his own, and where indeed one might fairly expect to have found it even somewhat caricatured.

Goldsmith continued with Lord Clare during the opening months of 1771.\* They were together at Gosfield, and at Bath; and it was in the latter city the amusing incident occurred which Bishop Percy has related, as told him by the Duchess of Northumberland. The Duke and Duchess occupied a house on one of the parades next door to Lord Clare's, and were surprised one day, when about to sit down to breakfast, to see Goldsmith enter the breakfast-room as from the street, and, without notice of them or the conversation they continued, fling himself unconcernedly, "in a manner the most free and easy," on a sofa. After

\* "I was last night at the club. Dr. Percy has written a long ballad in many *fits*; it is pretty enough. He has printed, and will soon publish it. Goldsmith is "at Bath, with Lord Clare. At Mr. Thrale's, where I am now writing, all are well." Johnson to Boswell, March 20, 1771. *Boswell*, iii. 153.

a few minutes, "as he was then perfectly known to them both, "they inquired of him the Bath news of the day; and imagining

"there was some mistake, endeavoured by easy and cheerful  
 1771.  
 Æt. 43. "conversation to prevent his being too much embarrassed,

"till, breakfast being served up, they invited him to stay and  
 "partake of it;" but upon this, the invitation calling him back from  
 the dream-land he had been visiting, he declared with profuse  
 apologies that he had thought he was in his friend Lord Clare's  
 house, and in irrecoverable confusion hastily withdrew. "But not,"  
 adds the Bishop, "till they had kindly made him promise to dine  
 "with them."\*

Of Lord Clare's friendly familiarity with the poet, this incident gives us proof; he had himself no very polished manners, being the *Squire Gawkey* of the libels of his time, and might the better tolerate Goldsmith's; but that their intercourse just at present was as frequent as familiar, seems to have been because, at this date, Lord Clare had most need of a friend. "I am told," says a letter-writer of the day, "that Doctor Goldsmith now generally lives "with his countryman Lord Clare, *who has lost his only son, Colonel "Nugent.*" There was left to him, however, an only daughter, the handsome girl whom Reynolds painted; who was married, in the year after Goldsmith's death, to the first Marquis of Buckingham; and with whom, she being as yet in her childhood, and he (as she loved long afterwards to say, and her son, Lord Nugent, often repeated to me) being never out of his, Goldsmith became companion and playfellow. He taught her games, she played him tricks, and, to the last hour of her long life, "dearly loved his "memory." Yet even in this friendly house he was not without occasional mortifications, such as his host could not protect him from; and one of them was related by himself. In his "diverting "simplicity," says Boswell, speaking with his own much more diverting air of patronage, Goldsmith complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. "I met him," he said, "at "Lord Clare's house in the country; and he took no more notice

\* *Percy Memoir*, 69.



"of me than if I had been an ordinary man." At this, according to Boswell, himself and the company laughed heartily; whereupon Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, gentlemen, Doctor Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought  
 1771.  
 Et. 43.  
 "to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think  
 "it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."\*

It was doubtless much for Lord Clare that *he* did not. By that

\* *Bos.* vii. 160. And see Lord Campbell's *Chancellors*, v. 353. Lord Campbell seems to infer that it was from a dislike to Goldsmith, and the set, that Lord Camden was "not a member of the literary club," which, the noble biographer tells us, he should have been glad to record that he was; but Lord Campbell does not seem to be aware that Camden was proposed at the club and black-balled. See *ante*, i. 312. And to what extent such noblemen as the whig or tory chancellors made up for their neglect of a Goldsmith by their attentions to a Johnson, Mr. Croker gives us some means of judging in a characteristic note to his first edition of *Boswell*. "His polite acquaintance did not extend much beyond the circle of Mr. Thrale, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the members of the club. There is no record that I recollect of his having dined at the table of any peer in London (Lord Lucan, an Irish peer, is hardly an exception). He seems scarcely to have known an English bishop, except Dr. Shipley, whom every one knew, and Bishop Porteus; and, except by a few occasional visits at the *bas bleux* assemblies of Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey, we do not trace him in anything like fashionable society. This seems strange to us; for happily, in our day, a literary man of much less than Johnson's eminence would be courted into the highest and most brilliant ranks. Lord Wellesley recollects, with regret, the little notice, compared with his posthumous reputation, which the fashionable world seemed to take of Johnson." In his last edition (p. 501) Mr. Croker omits the second sentence of this note; and in the third, omitting the sneer at Bishop Shipley, adds Mrs. Ord's name to those of Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey. But I believe the original note to be substantially correct, and so I leave it. Very honourable to him, let me add, is the invariable tone employed by Lord Campbell in commenting upon traits of this kind. "With all his titles and all his wealth," he exclaims of Lord Hardwicke (*Chancellors*, v. 167), "how poor is his fame in comparison of that of his contemporary, Samuel Johnson, whom he would not have received at his Sunday evening parties in Powis-house, or invited to hear his stale stories at Wimpole! A man desirous of solid fame would rather have written the *Rambler*, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, *Rasselas*, or the *Lives of the Poets*, than have delivered all Lord Hardwicke's speeches in parliament, and all his judgments in the Court of Chancery, although the Author had been sometimes obliged to pass the night on the ashes of a glass-house, and at last thought himself passing rich with his 300*l.* pension, while the Peer lived in splendour, and died worth a million. . . Hardwicke is to Johnson, as the most interesting life that could be written of Hardwicke is to Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, the proportion of "a farthing candle to the meridian sun." For a hint as to the causes of the general dislike of great people for Johnson, see *ante*, 179 (*note*); and we must always remember Johnson's own remark to Boswell: "Sir, great lords and great ladies don't love to have their mouths stopped."



simple means he would seem to have lessened many griefs, and added to many an enjoyment. Attentions are cheaply rendered that win such sympathy as a true heart returns ; and if, from <sup>1771.</sup> what Wraxall describes as the then spacious avenues of Gos-  
Æt. 43. field park, Lord Clare had sent an entire buck every season to his friend's humble chambers in the Temple, the single *Haunch of Venison* which Goldsmith sent back would richly have repaid him. The charming verses which bear that name were written this year, and appear to have been written for Lord Clare alone ; nor was it until two years after their writer's death that they obtained a wider audience than his immediate circle of friends. Yet, written with no higher aim than of private pleasantry, a more delightful piece of humour, or a more finished bit of style, has probably been seldom written. There is not a word to spare, every word is in its right place, the most boisterous animal spirits are controlled by the most charming good taste, and an indescribable airy elegance pervades and encircles all. Its very incidents seem of right to claim a place here, so naturally do they fall within the drama of Goldsmith's life.

Allusions in the lines fix their date to the early months of 1771 ; and it was probably on his return from the visit to which reference has just been made, that Lord Clare's side of venison had reached him. (On the whole, I may take occasion to remark, I prefer the text of the first edition, though the second had ten additional lines, and is likely, as alleged, to have been printed from Goldsmith's corrected copy.)

Thanks, my Lord, for your Venison, for finer or fatter  
 Never rang'd in a forest, or smoak'd in a platter ;  
 The Haunch was a picture for Painters to study,  
 The white was so white, and the red was so ruddy ; \*  
 Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting,  
 To spoil such a delicate picture by eating ;  
 I had thoughts, in my Chambers to place it in view,  
 To be shown to my Friends as a piece of *Virtu* ;  
 As in some *Irish* houses, where things are so-so,  
 One Gammon of Bacon hangs up for a show ;—

\* The second edition has :

“ The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy.”

But, for eating a Rasher of what they take pride in,  
They'd as soon think of eating the Pan it is fried in.

But these witty fancies yield to more practical views as he contemplates the delicate luxury ; and he bethinks him of the appetites most likely to do it justice.

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To go on with my Tale—as I gaz'd on the Haunch,  
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch ;  
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,  
To paint it, or eat it, just as he lik'd best.  
Of the Neck and the Breast I had next to dispose ;  
'Twas a neck and a Breast that might rival M—r—se :  
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,  
With the how, and the who, and the where, and the when :  
There's H—d, and C—y, and H—rth, and H—ff,  
I think they love Venison—I know they love Beef.

Ah ! he had excellent reason to know it. These were four of his poor-poet pensioners, three of whom, in the first uncorrected copy of the poem, stood undisguisedly as "*Coley*, and *Williams*, and "*Howard*, and *Hiff*;" but though it is said that for Howard he meant to substitute a surgeon named Hogarth,\* then living in Leicester-square, Hiffenan is alone recognisable now. M—r—se was Lord Townshend's *Dorothy Monroe*, to whose charms he devoted his verse.

There's my countryman H—gg—ns—Oh ! let him alone,  
For making a Blunder, or picking a Bone.  
But hang it—to Poets who seldom can eat,  
Your very good Mutton's a very good Treat ;  
Such Dainties to them ! It would look like a flirt,  
Like sending 'em Ruffles when wanting a Shirt.†  
While thus I debated, in Reverie centred,  
An Acquaintance, a Friend as he call'd himself, enter'd ;  
An underbred, fine-spoken Fellow was he,  
And he smil'd, as he looked at the Venison and me.

This is the hero of the poem ; and sketched so vividly, with a

\* But this is doubtful. It has also been conjectured that by C—y (*Coley*), George Colman was intended : a quite incredible supposition.

† I here again, in my text, interpose the reading of the first edition as preferable to this of the second :

"Such Dainties to them their Health it might hurt,  
It's like sending them Ruffles when wanting a Shirt."

humour so lifelike and droll, that he was probably a veritable person. In the first published copy indeed, which, as I have said, contains many touches preferable to those that replace them in the second version, he is described as

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"A fine spoken Custom-house officer he,  
Who smil'd as he gaz'd on the Venison and me."

In what follows, the leading notion is founded on one of Boileau's satires,\* but the comedy is both more rich and more delicate. The visitor ascertains that the venison is really Goldsmith's.

If that be the case then, cried he, very gay,  
I'm glad I have taken this House in my Way.  
To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;  
No Words—I insist on't—precisely at three:  
We'll have Johnson, and Burke, all the Wits will be there,  
My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my Lord Clare.†  
And, now that I think on't, as I am a sinner!  
We wanted this Venison to make out the Dinner.  
What say you—a pasty—it shall, and it must,‡  
And my Wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.  
Here, Porter!—this Venison with me to Mile-end;  
No stirring—I beg—my dear friend—my dear friend!§  
Thus snatching his hat, he brusht off like the wind,  
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.  
Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,  
*And nobody with me at sea but myself,*  
Though I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,  
Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good venison pasty,

\* The third satire of Boileau; which on the other hand owed not a little, as did also Regnier's tenth satire, to Horace, and his raillery of the banquet of Nasidienus. But Mr. Croker has well pointed out how infinitely more droll, natural, and original are the company here brought together; and how nicely the details of the dinner, overdone and tedious in Boileau, are touched by Goldsmith with a pleasantry not carried too far.

† The original of this couplet is in Boileau:

"Molière avec Tartuffe y doit jouer son rôle,  
Et Lambert qui plus est, m'a donné sa parole."

Yet the right to copy might be safely given to everybody, if accompanied by the condition that it should be as natural a copy as this. Who would believe it imitated?

‡ The first edition had

"I'll take no denial—you shall and you must."

§ This line stood in the first edition:

"No words, my dear Goldsmith! my very good friend!"

Were things that I never dislik'd in my life,  
 Though clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his Wife.  
 So next Day in due splendour to make my approach,  
 I drove to his door in my own Hackney-coach.

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Sad is the disappointment. He *had* better have remained, as the Duke of Cumberland had said to Lady Grosvenor in those love-letters with which the newspapers were now making mirth for the town, with "nobody with him at sea but himself." Johnson and Burke can't come. The one is at Thrale's, and the other at that horrible House of Commons. But never mind, says the host; you shall see something quite as good. And here Goldsmith remembered his former visitor, Parson Scott, who had just now got his fat Northumberland livings in return for his Anti-Sejanus letters, and, in hope of a bishopric very probably,\* was redoubling his anti-whig efforts through the same channel of the *Public Advertiser* under the signatures of Panurge and Cinna. "There is a villain who writes under the signature of Panurge," exclaimed the impetuous Barré, from his seat on the 12th of March, "a noted ministerial scribbler undoubtedly supported by government. He has this day published the grossest abuse upon the Duke of Portland, charging him with robbing Sir James Lowther; yet this dirty scoundrel is suffered to go unpunished."† Not wholly; for Goldsmith, to whom Burke had probably talked of the matter at the club, now ran his polished rapier through the political parson. Never mind for Burke and Johnson, repeats his host; I've provided capital substitutes.

For I knew it, he cried, both eternally fail,  
 The one with his speeches, and t'other with Thrale;

\* "I congratulate the ministry and the university," writes Nicholls to Gray a month or two before the poet's death (29th April, 1771), "on the honour they have both acquired by the promotion of Mr. Scott; may there never be wanting such lights of the Church! and such ornaments of that famous seminary of virtue and good learning!" During the contest of Lords Sandwich and Hardwicke for the Cambridge High-stewardship, when Scott was busy, as usual, in libelling for his profligate patron, Gray had described this infamous party-hack as hired to do all in his power to provoke people by personal abuse, yet "cannot so much as get himself answered." *Works*, iv. 34, v. 135.

† *Cavendish Debates*, ii. 390.



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Æt. 43.

But no matter, I'll warrant we'll make up the party,  
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.

The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,  
They're both of them merry, and authors like you.\*  
The one writes the *Snarler*, the other the *Scourge*;  
Some think he writes *Cinna*—he owns to *Panurge*.

The only hope left is the pasty; though it looks somewhat alarming when dinner is served, and no pasty appears. There is fried liver and bacon at the top, tripe at the bottom; there is spinach at the sides, with "pudding made hot;" and in the middle a place where the pasty "was—not." Now Goldsmith can't eat bacon or tripe; and even more odious to him than either is the ravenous literary Scot, and the talk of the chocolate-cheeked scribe of a Jew (who likes "these here dinners *so pretty and small*"): but still there's the pasty promised, with Kitty's famous crust; and of this a rumour goes gradually round the table, till the Scot, though already replete with tripe and bacon, announces "a corner "for thot;" and "we'll all keep a corner," is the general resolve, and on the pasty everything is concentrated: when the terrified maid brings in, not the pasty, but the catastrophe, in the shape of terrible news from the baker. To him had the pasty been carried, crust and all:

And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven  
Had shut out the Pasty on shutting his oven.

Having thus described the first important manifestation of that power of easy, witty, sarcastic verso which, even as life was closing on Goldsmith, began to be a formidable weapon in his hands, here may also be fitting occasion to connect with the *Haunch of Venison* a poem of which the date and circumstances attending its composition are unknown; which has never been publicly ascribed to him until now, and would seem, for some unaccountable reason, to have failed to find its way into print; yet which I cannot hesitate to call his, not simply because the manuscript is undoubtedly his handwriting, but for the better reason that what it

\* Or, as the first edition had it, "Who dabble and write in the papers like you."

contains is really not unworthy of him. In the absence of certain information I shall forbear to speculate on the probable circumstances which led to the selection of such a subject as an exercise in verse, and content myself with presenting a brief <sup>1771.</sup> outline of Vida's *Game of Chess*\* in the English heroic metre, <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> as it has been found transcribed in the writing of Oliver Goldsmith by my friend Mr. Bolton Corney, whose property it is, and who kindly permits my use of it.

It is a small quarto manuscript of thirty-four pages, containing 679 lines, to which a fly-leaf is appended in which Goldsmith notes the differences of nomenclature between Vida's chessmen and our own. It has occasional interlineations and corrections, but such as would occur in transcription rather than in a first or original copy. Sometimes indeed choice appears to have been made (as at page 29) between two words equally suitable to the sense and verse, as "to" for "toward;" but the insertions and erasures refer almost wholly to words or lines accidentally omitted and replaced. The triplet is always carefully marked; and seldom as it is found in any other of Goldsmith's poems, I am disposed to regard its frequent recurrence here as even helping, in some degree, to explain the motive which had led him to the trial of an experiment in rhyme comparatively new to him. If we suppose him, half consciously it may be, taking up the manner of the great master of translation, Dryden, who was at all times so much a favourite with him, he would at least, in so marked a peculiarity, be less apt to fall short than to err perhaps a little on the side of excess. Though I am far from thinking such to be the

\* Of the *Game of Chess*, Lowndes gives a list of seven versions in English: by James Rowbotham, 1562; George Jeffreys, 1736; W. Erskine, 1736; Samuel Pullin (Dublin), 1750; Anon. (Eton) 1769; Anon. (Oxford) 1778; and Murphy, 1786. The latter is to be found in his *Works*, vii. 67. But though the date of Murphy's translation is given by Lowndes as 1786 (when for the first time it was printed), it was in reality a production of his youth. I quote the preface to it. "For translating so ingenious a piece, the present writer, after saying that it is the production of his 'earliest years, will make no apology.'" See *Foot's Life*, 323-324. Whether the fact of the existence of this translation by Murphy became known to Goldsmith, and led to the suppression of his own, can only now be matter of conjecture.

result in the present instance. The effect of the whole translation is pleasing to me, and the mock-heroic effect I think not a little assisted by the reiterated use of the triplet and alexandrine.

<sup>1771.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 43.</sup> As to any evidences of authorship derivable from the appearance of the manuscript, I will only add another word. The lines in the translation have been carefully counted, and the number is marked in Goldsmith's hand at the close of his transcription. Such a fact is of course only to be taken in aid of other proof; but a man is not generally at the pains of counting, still less, I should say in such a case as Goldsmith's, of elaborately transcribing, lines which are not his own.

Of Vida himself there is little occasion to speak. What student of literature does not know the gay, courtly, scholarly priest, the favourite of Leo the magnificent, whom the seventh Clement invested with the mitre of Alba, and who was crowned with a laurel unfading as his wit by that great English poet, in whose fancy even the ancient glories of Italy seemed to linger still, while

A Raffaele painted and a Vida sung.  
Immortal Vida! on whose honoured brow  
The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow:  
Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,  
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame! \*

Yet when those lines appeared, in the most marvellous youthful poem of our language, Pope's greatest debt to Vida was still to be incurred. The Game of Chess enriched the *Rape of the Lock*† with the delightful Game at Ombre. Nor would it be possible better to express, to a reader unacquainted with the original, that charm in Vida's poem which appears to have amused and attracted Goldsmith's imagination, than by referring to the close exactness

\* *Essay on Criticism*, l. 705-8. Written before Pope was twenty. (*Spence*, 41, and 45.)

† Though the first sketch of this delightful poem (characterised by Goldsmith in his *Beauties of English Poetry* as "Pope's most finished production, and perhaps the "most perfect in our language") appeared in Lintot's *Miscellany* within a year after the publication of the *Essay on Criticism*, it did not receive its highest touches till the appearance of the second edition, which contained the machinery of the Sylphs and the Game at Ombre. See *Works*, lii. 169.

in the movements of the game between the Baron and Belinda, on which Pope has lavished such exquisite fancy, and wit so delicate and masterly. With all this, Vida has combined in a yet greater degree the subtle play of satire implied in the elevation of his theme to the epic rank. The machinery employed, the similes used, are those in which the epic poets claim a peculiar property. Yet, at the same time, so closely are the most intricate and masterly moves of chess expressed in the various fortunes of the combatants, in the penalties that await their rashness or the success that attends their stratagems, that Pope Leo thought the ignorant might derive a knowledge of the game from Vida's hexameters alone.

Whether or not Goldsmith had any personal skill at chess, I have not been able to discover; but that he was not entirely ignorant of it may be presumed from the facility and elegance of his paraphrase. When Mr. George Jeffreys translated the same poem (one of seven different English versions of it), and asked Pope's opinion of its execution, the poet thought it unbecoming to deliver his opinion "upon a subject to which he is a stranger;"\* but perhaps this was the civil avoidance of a disagreeable request, for what knowledge of the subject, more than Vida himself possessed, should his translator, or the critic of his translator, require? Nevertheless there may be enough in Pope's remark to favour the presumption of some acquaintance with the game in any one who should under-

\* I quote from the preface to *Father Francis and Sister Constance, a Poem from a Story in the Spectator. And Chess, a Poem translated into English from Vida.* By George Jeffreys, Esq. (quarto, 1736). The four opening lines by Mr. Jeffreys run thus:

"A sportive image of the martial rage,  
And war which two fictitious monarchs wage,  
Their boxen troops inspir'd by thirst of praise,  
And party-colour'd arms invite my lays."

How inferior to the ease and spirit of Goldsmith!

"Armies of box that sportively engage,  
And mimic real battels in their rage,  
Pleas'd I recount; how, smit with glory's charms,  
Two mighty Monarchs met in adverse arms,  
Sable and white."



take such a labour of love connected with it, and this is strengthened by the confidence and freedom of Goldsmith's verse. There is even something in the note which he appends to the conclusion of his labour that might appear as if written by one familiar with chess. "Archers," he says, referring to Vida's verse, "are what we call Bishops; Horse are what we call Knights; Elephants are what we call Tow'rs, Castles, or Rooks. Apollo "has y<sup>e</sup> white men, Mercury y<sup>e</sup> black."

But before these Deities of the strife are introduced, the opposing forces in due precedence are marshalled.

So mov'd the boxen hosts, each double-lin'd,  
Their diffrent colours floating in the wind:  
As if an army of the Gauls should go,  
With their white standards o'er the Alpine snow  
To meet in rigid fight on scorching sands  
The sun-burnt Moors and Memnon's swarthy bands.\*

The forces being brought into the field, the order of the fray is next shown, and the stated laws by which their several weapons of assault or defence are subject to be controlled. Here is seen the elegant and easy art, not of the poet simply, but of the master of the laws of the game.

To lead the fight, the Kings from all their bands  
Choose whom they please to bear their great commands.  
Should a black Hero first to battle go,  
Instant a white one guards against the blow;  
But only one at once can charge or shun the foe. . . .  
But the great Indian beasts, whose backs sustain  
Vast turrets arm'd, when on the redd'ning plain  
They join in all the terror of the fight,  
Forward or backward, to the left or right  
Run furious, and impatient of confine  
Scour through the field, and threat the farthest line.

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\* This is one of those passages which Pope has most directly imitated in the *Game at Ombre* (*Rape of the Lock*, canto iii. verses 81, &c.); but, as Joseph Warton has not failed to point out (*Essay on Poems and Writings of Pope*, Ed. 1783, i. 241), masterly as Pope's lines are,

"Thus, when dispers'd a routed army runs," &c.

the exquisite propriety of the original, which arises from the different colours of the men at chess, is lost by being transferred to the mixed and undistinguishable colours of the cards of Belinda and the Baron.

Yet must they ne'er obliquely aim their blows;  
 That only manner is allowed to those  
 Whom Mars has favour'd most, who bend the stubborn bows. . . .  
 The fiery steed, regardless of the reins,  
 Comes prancing on; but sullenly disdains  
 The path direct, and boldly wheeling round,  
 Leaps o'er a double space at ev'ry bound,  
 And shifts from white or black to diff'rent colour'd ground.  
 But the fierce Queen whom dangers ne'er dismay,  
 The strength and terror of the bloody day,  
 In a straight line spreads her destruction wide,  
 To left or right, before, behind, aside.

1771.

Æt. 43.

The divine machinery is then set in motion. The Gods survey the forces in array, and, with their usual desire to enliven the dullness of Olympus, are anxious to engage along with them; but Jove checks and forbids them to take part on either side, and, summoning Mercury and Apollo, places the dark warriors under command of Hermes and the white under that of Phœbus, restricting the divine interference to these two, and limiting their power by the expressed regulations of the contest.

Then call'd he Phœbus from among the Pow'rs,  
 And subtle Hermes, whom in softer hours  
 Fair Maia bore: Youth wanton'd in their face,  
 Both in life's bloom, both shone with equal grace.  
 Hermes as yet had never wing'd his feet;  
 As yet Apollo in his radiant seat  
 Had never driv'n his chariot through the air,  
 Known by his bow alone and golden hair.

And now, as the fray proceeds under these respective leaders, it becomes the pleasant art of the poet to show you how superior in such a conflict are the sly resources of stratagem and deceit over those of a more generous and manly nature. The first advantage falls to Mercury, and Apollo can only relieve his King at great sacrifice and loss.

Apollo sigh'd, and hast'ning to relieve  
 The straiten'd Monarch, grieved that he must leave  
 His martial Elephant expos'd to fate,  
 And view'd with pitying eyes his dang'rous state.  
 First in his thoughts however was his care  
 To save his King, whom to the neighb'ring square  
 On the right hand, he snatch'd with trembling flight;  
 At this with fury springs the sable Knight,

1771.  
Æt. 43.

Drew his keen sword, and rising to the blow,  
Sent the great Indian brute to shades below.  
O fatal loss! for none except the Queen  
Spreads such a terror through the bloody scene.  
Yet shall you ne'er unpunish'd boast your prize,  
The Delian God with stern resentment cries ; -  
And wedg'd him round with foot, and pour'd in fresh supplies . . .  
Fir'd at this great success, with double rage  
Apollo hurries on his troops t' engage,  
For blood and havoc wild ; and, while he leads  
His troops thus careless, loses both his steeds ;  
For if some adverse warriors were o'erthrown,  
He little thought what dangers threat his own.  
But slyer Hermes with observant eyes  
March'd slowly cautious, and at distance spies  
What moves must next succeed, what dangers next arise.

Flushed with the success of his wily policy, however, Hermes is betrayed into a violation of the laws of the fight, which might have escaped a less subtle eye than that of Phœbus ; but the fraud is exposed and laughed at. Nothing can be better than the ease and grace with which in the original the poet thus expresses the various incidents to which an ordinary game of chess might be subject, while at the same time he never lays aside the dignity, the politeness, the poetry of his heroic verse. Nor is the absence of all effort more apparent in Vida's Latin than in Goldsmith's English lines.

He smil'd, and turning to the Gods he said :  
Though, Hermes, you are perfect in your trade,  
And you can trick and cheat to great surprise,  
These little slights no more shall blind my eyes ;  
Correct then if you please the move you thus disguise.  
The Circle laugh'd aloud ; and Maia's son  
(As if it had but by mistake been done)  
Recalled his Archer, &c.

The combat is now resumed with greater desperation on both sides, and its fortunes vary more and more. Its interest becomes at last too intense for the spectators. Mars secretly helps Hermes, Vulcan moves on tiptoe to the aid of Phœbus, every art and resource is called in on both sides, Mercury is made fretful, Apollo more cheerful. Then the Queens meet in deadly encounter, while countless lives are poured out around them ; and the black amazon

is slain by the white, who in return falls by a sable archer. But the fair monarch's bereavement is soon consoled by the spirit and the ambition which bring up one of his lost partner's attendants gallantly into her place.

1771.

Æt. 43.

("Then the pleas'd King gives orders to prepare  
The Crown, the Sceptre, and the Royal Chair,  
And owns her for his Queen.")

At this, the vexation of Hermes becomes for a time irrepressible; but, warned by the loss into which again his temper betrays him, he recovers self-possession, effects a diversion by new arts, resumes his masterly stratagems, places a new Queen by his black monarch's side, and again with equal forces threatens and appals his adversary.

Fierce comes the sable Queen, with fatal threat  
Surrounds the Monarch in his royal seat;  
Rusht here and there, nor rested till she slew  
The last remainder of the whiten'd crew.  
Sole stood the King; the midst of all the plain,  
Weak and defenceless, his companions slain.  
As when the ruddy morn ascending high  
Has chac'd the twinkling stars from all the sky,  
Your star, fair Venus, still retains its light,  
And loveliest goes the latest out of sight.  
No safety's left, no gleams of hope remain,  
Yet did he not as vanquisht quit the plain;  
But try'd to shut himself between the foe,  
Unhurt through swords and spears he hop'd to go,  
Until no room was left to shun the fatal blow.  
For, if none threaten'd, his immediate fate  
And his next move must ruin all his state;  
All their past toil and labour is in vain,  
Vain all the bloody carnage of the plain,  
Neither would triumph then, the laurel neither gain.

But not so fortunate is the fair-haired King, on whom the rival monarch now steadily advances, and, watching his opportunity for bringing up his Queen, smiles as the fatal blow, no longer evitable, is struck by his swarthy partner. The fight is over, and Mercury remains master of the field.

The Victor could not from his insults keep;  
But laugh'd and sneer'd to see Apollo weep.  
Jove call'd him near, and gave him in his hand  
The pow'rful happy and mysterious wand,



1771.  
Æt. 43.

By which the Shades are call'd to purer day,  
When penal fire has purg'd their sins away;  
By which the guilty are condemn'd to dwell  
In the dark mansions of the deepest hell;  
By which he gives us sleep, or sleep denies,  
And closes at the last the dying eyes.  
Soon after this, the heavenly Victor brought  
The game on earth, and first th' Italians taught.  
For (as they say) fair Scacchi he espy'd  
Feeding her cygnets in the silver tide  
(Scacchi the loveliest Seriad of the place),  
And as she stray'd, took her to his embrace.  
Then, to reward her for her virtue lost,  
Gave her the Men and chequer'd board, embost  
With gold and silver curiously inlay'd;  
And taught her how the Game was to be play'd.  
Ev'n now 'tis honour'd with her happy name,  
And Rome and all the world admire the Game.  
All which the Seriards told me heretofore,  
When my boy-notes amus'd the Serian shore.

And so, resuming the progress of my narrative, I leave without further remark these lively verses, which I should scarcely have quoted at such length if they were not here for the first time printed,\* as yet remained generally inaccessible, and, in whatever view to be regarded, are at least a striking and unexpected *new fact* in the life of Oliver Goldsmith.

\* Since this was written, I am happy to find that the poem will be included in one of the volumes of an edition of the *Works of Goldsmith* which as these sheets are passing through the press is announced by Mr. Murray. This edition, the most complete which has yet been issued, will have the advantage of Mr. Cunningham's care and knowledge in preparing and illustrating the text, which in some important cases will for the first time be printed with anything like reasonable accuracy. 1853.

## CHAPTER X.

### A ROUND OF PLEASURES.

1771.

It may have been on hearing the *Haunch of Venison* read in the Beauclerc and Bunbury circles (it was from a copy which Lord Clare had given Bunbury the poem was printed after the writer's death) that Horace Walpole conceded to the "silly <sup>1771.</sup> <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> "changeling," as he called Goldsmith, "bright gleams of "parts;" this being the style of verse he relished most, and could value beyond *Travellers* and *Deserted Villages*.\* It was in a later letter that Walpole made it a kind of boast that he had never exchanged a syllable with Johnson in his life, and had never been in a room with him six times; for the necessity of finding himself, once a year, at least, perforce in the same room with him, and with Goldsmith too, did not begin till the present year. On St. George's day, 1771, Sir Joshua Reynolds took the chair at the first annual dinner of the Royal Academy: where the entertainers, himself and his fellow-academicians, sat surrounded by such evidence of claims to admiration as their own pencils had adorned the walls with, and their guests were the most distinguished men of the day; the highest in rank and the highest in genius, the poet as well as the

\* "I should like to be intimate with Mr. Anstey, even though he wrote *Lord Buckhorse*, or with the author of the *Heroic Epistle*. I have no thirst to know the rest of my contemporaries, from the absurd bombast of Doctor Johnson down to the silly Doctor Goldsmith; though the latter changeling has had bright gleams of parts, and the former had sense till he changed it for words, and sold it for a pension. Don't think me scornful. Recollect that I have seen Pope and lived "with Gray." *Coll. Lett.* v. 345-6.

prince, the minister of state and the man of trade.\* Goldsmith attended every dinner until his death, and so became personally known to several men of rank belonging to both parties in the state, <sup>1771.</sup> who doubtless at any other time or in any other place would <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> hardly have remembered or acknowledged his name. Nor, it may be added, has the attraction of these celebrated dinners suffered any diminution since. All who have had the privilege of invitation to them can testify to the interest they still excite; to the fact that princes and painters, men of letters and ministers of state, tradesmen and noblemen, still assemble at that hospitable table with objects of a common admiration and sympathy around them; to the happy occasion which their friendly greetings afford for the suspension of all excitements of rivalry not between artists or academicians alone, but between the most eager combatants of public life, ministerial and ex-ministerial; and to the striking effect with which, as the twilight of the summer evening gathers round while the dinner is in progress, the sudden lighting of the room at its close, as the president proposes the health and pro-

\* It was on the occasion of Johnson's last appearance at this famous dinner (in 1784), that he left his seat by desire of the Prince of Wales, and went to the head of the table to be introduced. It was at the dinner two years later, that the Prince of Wales had on his right hand the ill-fated Duke of Orleans, so soon to perish on the scaffold, who sat exactly under Reynolds's fine full-length portrait of him, and of whom Sir Joshua remarked, when the Duke rose to address the company, that he never saw a man stand so gracefully in a position which few men, the arms being wholly unemployed, could sustain with dignity or ease. The sons of this Duke of Orleans, I may add, were in England after his death, on the 4th August, 1797; and the occurrence called forth this singular remark from Southey, then in the "hot youth" of his republicanism: "Should there ever again be a king in France (which God forbid!) it will be the elder" (Louis Philippe) "of these young men. He will be a happier and a better man as an American farmer." (*Common-Place Book*, iv. 516.) For Walter Scott at one of these dinners, see *Life*, vii. 249-50; and for Scott's capital anecdote of John Kemble on the same occasion, see *Miscell. Prose*, xx. 196. At the dinner in 1789 the Prince of Wales was again present, and this was when Burke, catching sight of the print-seller Boydell at one of the tables while toasts to high-born dignitaries were freely circulating, scrawled the following note in pencil and sent it up to Sir Joshua. "This end of the table, in which, as there are many admirers of the art there are many friends of yours, wish to drink an English tradesman who patronises the art better than the Grand Monarque of France:" whereupon, the Prince heartily approving, Boydell's health went round with acclamation.

nounces the name of the sovereign, appears to give startling life to the forms and colours on the pictured walls.

Undoubtedly this annual dinner, then, must be pronounced one of the happiest of those devices of the president by which <sup>1771.</sup> he steered the new and unchartered Academy through the <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> quicksands and shoals that had wrecked the chartered institution out of which it rose. Academies cannot create genius; academies had nothing to do with the begetting of Hogarth, or Reynolds, or Wilson, or Gainsborough, the greatest names of our English school; but they may assist in the wise development of such original powers, may guide and regulate their prudent and successful application,\* and above all may, and *do*, strengthen the

\* "Could we teach taste or genius by rules," said Reynolds in his Third Discourse (delivered on the 14th December, 1770), "they would be no longer taste or genius." And he proceeded to show that there could not be any precise invariable rules for the acquisition or exercise of those great qualities, yet that they would always be found to operate in proportion to habits of attention acquired in observing the works of nature, to skill shown in selecting, and to care displayed in digesting, methodising, and comparing observations. "Experience is all in all," said Reynolds with subtle truth; "*but it is not every one who profits by experience.*" (*Works*, i. 57.) It seems to me a great wrong to Reynolds to accuse him, as it is the cant of his objectors to do, of having unfairly depreciated genius as contrasted with study or labour, or of having taught that it was not to nature, but to modifications of it existing in idea, the student's devotion should be paid. I have formerly said (i. 307) that he overrated the effects of education; but he never misunderstood its objects, or betrayed it into any wrong direction. His principle is thoroughly sound. It is to draw from the study of the actual the noblest lessons of the ideal. "I cannot help imagining," he said, in a striking passage of that noble Second Discourse of the 11th December, 1769, to which Johnson, Burke, and Goldsmith listened with such delight, "that I see a promising young painter equally vigilant, whether "at home, or abroad in the streets, or in the fields. Every object that presents itself, "is to him a lesson. He regards all Nature with a view to his profession; and combines her beauties, or corrects her defects. He examines the countenances of men "under the influence of passion; and often catches the most pleasing hints, from "subjects of turbulence or deformity. Even bad pictures themselves supply him "with useful documents," &c. (*Works*, i. 47.) As this page is passing through the press (12th December, 1853), I have had the privilege of hearing the address on the distribution of prizes by the distinguished artist who now fills the chair of Reynolds; and so appropriate was it to the remarks here made, that I could not perhaps better define its subject than by calling it a Discourse on the non-Academical merits of a well-directed Academy. The importance of rules admitted, it was an argument to show that the subtleties of art might lie in disregarding them; it was an earnest adjuration to the students to seek always the ideal in the actual, even as Reynolds again and again advised them; and, as well in the elegance of the composition, and



painter's claims to consideration and esteem, and give, to that sense of dignity which should invest every liberal art, and which too often passes for an airy nothing amid the hustle and crowd of more  
 1771. vulgar pretences, "a local habitation and a name." This was  
 Æt. 43. the main wise drift of Reynolds and his fellow-labourers; it was the charter that held them together in spite of all their later dissensions; and to this day it outweighs the gravest fault or disadvantage that has yet been charged against the Royal Academy.

A fragment of the conversation at this first Academy dinner has survived; and takes us from it to the darkest contrast, to the most deplorable picture of human misery and disadvantage, which even these pages have described. Goldsmith spoke of an extraordinary boy who had come up to London from Bristol, died very suddenly and miserably, and left a wonderful treasure of ancient poetry behind him. Horace Walpole listened carelessly at first, it would seem; but very soon perceived that the subject of conversation had a special interest for himself. Some years afterwards he described what passed, with an affectation of equanimity which even then he did not feel. "Dining at the Royal Academy," he said, "Doctor Goldsmith drew the attention of the company with "an account of a marvellous treasure of ancient poems lately "discovered at Bristol, and expressed enthusiastic belief in them, "for which he was laughed at by Doctor Johnson,\* who was "present. I soon found this was the trouvaille of my friend "Chatterton, and I told Doctor Goldsmith that this novelty was

the simplicity and unaffectedness of diction, as in the scholarly abundance of the illustration used, it was impossible not to feel that the first and greatest of the presidents has found no unworthy representative in Sir Charles Eastlake. 1853. The memory of this excellent man, who died at Pisa on the Christmas Eve of 1865, will survive in his valuable and most original writings on art; in his fine early landscapes, and those later pictures which are masterpieces of enchanting grace, rich sentiment, and refined execution; in the very remarkable letters lately published by Lady Eastlake (*Life of Sir Charles Lock Eastlake*: Murray, 1868); and by its lasting association with the National Gallery, which first under his direction became worthy of the nation, and has since found a director in Mr. Boxall bent on giving full completion to his predecessor's noblest designs. 1870.

\* Nevertheless Dr. Johnson could say six years later, "This is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the "whelp has written such things." *Boswell*, vi. 173.

“known to me, who might, if I had pleased, have had the honour  
“of ushering the great discovery to the learned world. You may



“imagine, sir, we did not at all agree in the  
“measure of our faith; but though his credu-  
“lity diverted me,\* my mirth was  
“soon dashed; for on asking  
“about Chatterton, he told me he  
“had been in London, and had  
“destroyed himself. The persons  
“of honour and veracity who  
“were present will attest with  
“what surprise and concern I  
“thus first heard of his death.”  
Yes; for the concern was natural.  
Even a Goldsmith credulity, for  
once, would have been Walpole’s

\* “I supposed,” he says in the same paper printed at Strawberry-hill in 1779, and to be found in his *Works*, iv. 225—235, “the pieces were of the age of Richard I; “that impression was so strong on my mind, that two years after, when Doctor Gold-

better friend. His mirth was dashed at the time, and his peace was for many years invaded, by that remorseful image of Chatterton. "From the time he resisted the imposition,"  
1771.  
Æt. 43. says Miss Hawkins in her considerate way, "he began "to go down in public favour."\* An imposition it undoubtedly was, even such an imposition as he had himself attempted with his *Castle of Otranto*; and he had a perfect right on that ground to resist it. It was no guilt he had committed, but it was a great occasion lost. The poor boy who invented *Rowley* (the most wonderful invention of literature, all things considered) had not only communicated his discovery to the "learned Mr. Walpole," but the learned Mr. Walpole had with profuse respect and deference believed in it, till Gray and Mason laughed at him; when, turning coldly away from Chatterton's eager proposals, he planted in that young ambitious heart its bitterest thorn. As for Goldsmith's upholding of the authenticity of *Rowley*, it may pass with a smile, if it really meant anything more than a belief in poor Chatterton himself;† and it is a pity that Dr. Percy should have got up a quarrel with him about it, as

"smith told me they were allotted to the age of Henry IV or V, I said with surprise, "They have shifted the date extremely."

\* *Anecdotes*, 107. The same lady has given us one of the most lively portraiture of the appearance and manner of Horace Walpole at this particular time which any one has preserved for us. He did not more oddly contrast with Goldsmith in mind than he did in person! "His figure," says Miss Hawkins, "was . . . not merely tall, "but more properly *long* and slender to excess; his complexion and particularly his "hands, of a most unhealthy paleness. I speak of him before the year 1772. His "eyes were remarkably bright and penetrating, very dark and lively: his voice was "not strong, but his tones were extremely pleasant, and if I may so say, highly "gentlemanly. I do not remember his common gait; he always entered a room in "that style of affected delicacy, which fashion had then made almost natural;— "*chapeau bras* between his hands as if he wished to compress it, or under his arm, "—knees bent, and feet on tiptoe, as if afraid of a wet floor." *Anecdotes*, 106.

† In another of the many letters he wrote having reference to this sore and sensitive subject, Walpole, addressing Cole in 1780 on Herbert Croft's *Love and Madness*, has a passage which seems hardly reconcilable with the impression he had elsewhere conveyed of Goldsmith's credulous faith in all the statements put forth by Chatterton, a matter quite distinct from admiration of the genius displayed in *Rowley*. "I did not repeat what Dr. Goldsmith told me at the Royal Academy when I first "heard of his death, that he went by the appellation of *The Young Villain*." ("This, "I am sure," writes Southey in his *Common-Place Book*, i. 532, "is false."). I may



he is said to have done.\* There is nothing so incredible that the wisest may not be found to believe. Hume believed in *Ossian* once, though a few years later he doubted, and at his death scornfully *disbelieved*. 1771.  
Æt. 43.

Goldsmith's stay in London, at this time, was to see his *English History* through the press; and it did not long detain him. But his reappearance in the Temple seldom failed to bring him new acquaintances now. His reputation kept no one at a distance: for his hospitable habits, his genial unaffected ways, were notorious to all; and in particular to his countrymen. The Temple student from Ireland, with or without introduction, seems to have walked into his chambers as into a home. To this period belong two such new acquaintances, sufficiently famous to have survived for recollection. The one was a youth named Robert Day, afterwards one of the Irish judges, and more famous for his amiability than his law,† first made known to Goldsmith by his namesake John Day, afterwards an advocate in India; the other was Day's friend and fellow-student, now ripening for a great career, and the achievement of an illustrious name. The first strong impression of Henry Grattan's accomplishments was made upon Goldsmith; and it need not be reckoned their least distinction. Judge Day

at the same time add that Goldsmith's alleged admiration of the poems, well justified as it was by their own merit, is borne out by an anecdote of the time. "The Doctor" was a great admirer of Rowley's poems, and wished much to purchase the MS. "copy of them, then in the possession of Mr. George Catcott of Bristol. The Doctor had, however, nothing but his note of hand to offer for them. 'Alas, sir,' replied Mr. Catcott, 'I fear a poet's note of hand is not very current upon our exchange of "Bristol." *Europ. Mag.* xxi. 88.

\* "How frail alas! are all human friendships! I was witness to an entire separation between Percy and Goldsmith, about Rowley's poems." *Cradock*, i. 206. The separation was not "entire," for their intimacy was renewed; but of Percy's hasty temper there can be no doubt. When Dr. Anderson described to the bishop, in 1805, the proposal he had made to Messrs. Longman and Rees for a new edition of the *Northern Antiquities* and Mr. Longman's instant preference of the bishop over Walter Scott as its editor, he went on to say that Mr. Rees "peremptorily declined the undertaking, which Longman caught eagerly, and said, from the account Mr. Davies had given him of your temper and conduct in the edition of "Goldsmith, he would have no concern with you in any like undertaking whatever." Nichols's *Illustrations*, vii. 155-6. This may explain *ante*, i. 169.

† It was of him that Plunket said, "A case tried before Day was a case tried in "the dark."



lived to talk and write to a biographer of the poet about these early times ; \* and described the "great delight" which the conversation and society of Grattan, then a youth of about nineteen, seemed to give to their more distinguished countryman. Again and again he would come to Grattan's room in Essex-court ; till "his warm heart," Mr. Day modestly adds, "became naturally prepossessed towards the associate of one whom he so much admired."

Goldsmith's personal appearance and manners made a lively impression on the young Templar. He recalled them vividly after a lapse of nearly seventy years, and Day's description is one of the best we have. He was short, he says ; about five feet five or six inches ; strong, but not heavy in make, and rather fair in complexion ; his hair, such at least as could be distinguished from his wig, was brown. "His features were plain, but not repulsive ; certainly not so when lighted up by conversation." Though his complexion was pale, his face round and pitted with the small-pox, and a somewhat remarkable projection of his forehead and his upper lip suggested excellent sport for the caricaturists, † the expression of intelligence, benevolence, and good-humour predominated over every disadvantage, and made the face extremely pleasing. ‡ This indeed is not more evident in Reynolds's paintings than in Bunbury's whimsical drawings ; though I fancy it

\* *Prior*, ii. 357-361.

† See *ante*, p. 177, for a specimen of Bunbury's caricaturing.

‡ Substantially it is the same description as we find in the *Percy Memoir*. "Nothing could be more amiable than the general features of his mind, those of his person were not perhaps so engaging. His stature was under the middle size, his body strongly built, and his limbs more sturdy than elegant: his complexion was pale, his forehead low, his face almost round and pitted with the small-pox ; but marked with strong lines of thinking. His first appearance was not captivating ; but when he grew easy and cheerful in company, he relaxed with such a display of good humour as soon removed every unfavourable impression." 117-118. It is perhaps worth adding that Percy afterwards discovered and described a singular likeness to Goldsmith in his poor weaver-boy protégé, the self-taught poet William Cunningham. "Cunningham, though very unlike, in his bodily frame, to Goldsmith, who was short and not slender, so strongly resembled him in face, that, when he stood near the profile of the Doctor, his portrait seemed to have been drawn for him." *Nichols's Illustrations*, vii. 145.

with more of a simple plaintive expression \* than has been given to it by the president, who, with a natural and noble respect, was perhaps too anxious to put the author before the man. His manners were kindly, genial, and “perhaps on the whole, we <sup>1771.</sup> <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> “may say not polished :” at least, Mr. Day explains, without that refinement and good breeding which the exquisite polish of his compositions would lead us to expect. He was always cheerful and animated, “often indeed boisterous in his mirth ;” entered with spirit into convivial society ; contributed largely to its enjoyments by solidity of information, and by the naïveté and originality of his character ; talked often without premeditation, and laughed loudly without restraint. It was a laugh ambitious to compete with even Johnson’s : which Tom Davies, with an enviable knowledge of natural history, compared to the laugh of a rhinoceros ; and which seemed to Boswell, in their midnight walkings, to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch. To such explosions of mirth from Goldsmith, it would seem, the Grecian coffee-house now oftenest echoed ; for this had become the favourite resort of the Irish and Lancashire Templars, whom he delighted in collecting around him, in entertaining with a cordial and unostentatious hospitality, and in occasionally amusing with his flute or with whist, “neither of which he played very well.” Of his occupations and his dress at the time, Judge Day confirms and further illustrates what is already known to us. He was composing light and superficial works, he says, memoirs and histories ; not for fame, but for the more urgent need of recruiting exhausted finances. To such labours he returned, and shut himself up to provide fresh matter for his bookseller, and fresh supplies for himself, whenever his funds were dissipated ; “and they fled more rapidly from his being “the dupe of many artful persons, male and female, who practised

\* This, I confess, I miss in it, though it is only fair to say that Leslie found it, and a great deal more. He calls it “the most pathetic picture Reynolds ever painted : not only because, in looking at it, I think of the Deserted Village, but far more because “the sufferings of a whole life, and of the tenderest of hearts, are written in it. The “Ugolino of Reynolds is agonising ; but the portrait of Oliver Goldsmith displays “a gentler, yet a rarer power.” (*Life*, i. 361.) We must surely confess that there is some exaggeration here.

"upon his benevolence." With a purse replenished by labour of this kind, adds the worthy judge, the season of relaxation and pleasure took its turn in attending the theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, <sup>1771.</sup> and other scenes of gaiety and amusement; which he con- <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> tinued to frequent as long as his supply held out, and where he was fond of exhibiting his muscular little person in the gayest apparel of the day, to which were added a bag-wig and sword.\*

This favourite costume, it appears, involved him one day in a short but comical dialogue with two coxcombs in the Strand, one of whom, pointing to Goldsmith, called to his companion to "look at that fly with a long pin stuck through it:" whereupon, says Mr. Day, the sturdy little poet instantly called aloud to the passers-by to caution them against "that brace of disguised pickpockets;" and, to show that he wore a sword, as well for defence from insolence as for ornament, retired from the footpath into the coach-way to give himself more space, "and half drawing, beckoned to the witty gentleman armed in like manner to follow him: but he and his companion thinking prudence the better part of valour, declined the invitation, and sneaked away amid the hootings of the spectators." The prudent example was followed not long afterwards by his old friend Kenrick, who, having grossly libelled him in some coarse lines on seeing his name "in the list of mummers at the late masquerade,"† and being, by Gold-

\* His pleasant delight in such scenes he is always candidly confessing in his writings. "The illuminations began before we arrived, and I must confess that, upon entering the gardens I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure: the lights everywhere glimmering through the scarcely-moving trees—the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night—the natural concert of the birds, in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art—the company gaily-dressed, looking satisfaction—and the tables spread with various delicacies," &c. &c. *Citizen of the World*, Letter lxxi.

† Before I give the lines, let me prefix a few words about Kenrick. "I remember one evening," says Boswell, "when some of his works were mentioned, Dr. Goldsmith said, he had never heard of them; upon which Dr. Johnson observed, 'Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves public, without making themselves known.'" (ii. 300.) Hawkins characterises him as "a Dr. Kenrick, the author of many scurrilous publications now deservedly forgotten, who, in a small volume intitled *Lexiphanes*, endeavoured to turn many passages in the *Rambler*, and interpretations in the *Dictionary*, into ridicule." *Life of Johnson*, 346.

smith himself at an accidental meeting in the Chapter coffee-house, not only charged with the offence but with personal responsibility for it, made a shuffling and lame retreat from his previously avowed satire, and publicly declared his disbelief of <sup>1771.</sup> <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> the foul imputations contained in it. Yet an acquaintance of both entered the house soon after Goldsmith had quitted it, and relates that he found Kenrick publicly haranguing the coffee-room against the man to whom he had just apologised, and showing off both the ignorance of science (a great subject with the "rule-maker") and the enormous conceit of Goldsmith, by an account of how he had on some occasion maintained that the sun was not eight days or so more in the northern than in the southern signs, and, being referred to Maupertuis for a better opinion, had answered, "Maupertuis! I know more of the matter than Maupertuis."

The masquerade itself was a weakness to be confessed. It was among the temptations of the town or winter-Ranelagh which was this year built in the Oxford-road at an expense of several

Kenrick, I may add, was living at this particular time in "Warwick-street, Golden-square, next door to a glazier" (as I find from one of his insolently characteristic letters to George Colman, in which he tells him that his "only motive for writing for the stage," or for anything else, "is profit." *Post. Let.* 158). Here are the lines. "To Dr. Goldsmith; on seeing his name in the list of mummers at the late masquerade:

"How widely different, Goldsmith, are the ways  
Of Doctors now, and those of ancient days!  
Theirs taught the truth in academic shades,  
Ours in lewd hops and midnight masquerades.  
So changed the times! say, philosophic sage,  
Whose genius suits so well this tasteful age,  
Is the Pantheon, late a sink obscene,  
Become the fountain of chaste Hippocrene?  
Or do thy moral numbers quaintly flow,  
Inspired by th' *Aganippe* of Soho?  
Do wisdom's sons gorge cates and vermicelli,  
Like beastly Bickerstaff or bothering Kelly?  
Or art thou tired of th' undeserved applause,  
Bestowed on bards affecting Virtue's cause?  
Is this the good that makes the humble vain,  
The good philosophy should not disdain?  
If so, let pride dissemble all it can,  
A modern sage is still much less than man."



thousand pounds, and with such dazzling magnificence (it is now the poor faded Pantheon of Oxford-street) that "Balbec in all its glory"

was the comparison it suggested to Horace Walpole. Here, <sup>1771.</sup> and at Vauxhall, there is little doubt that Goldsmith was often <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> to be seen; and even here his friend Reynolds goodnaturedly kept him company. "Sir Joshua and Doctor Goldsmith at Vauxhall" is a fact that now frequently meets us in the *Garrick Correspondence*. "Sir Joshua and Goldsmith," writes Beauclerc to Lord Charlemont, "have got into a round of pleasures." "Would you imagine," he adds in another letter, "that Sir Joshua is extremely anxious to be a member of Almacks? You see what noble ambition will make a man attempt." \* Whether the same noble ambition animated Goldsmith; whether the friends ever appeared in red-heeled shoes to imitate the leading macaronis; † or, in rivalry of Charles Fox ‡ and Lord Carlisle, masqueraded at

\* Hardy's *Life of Lord Charlemont*, 177 and 179. Reynolds's last biographer tells us that he saw more of Goldsmith than of any other friend at this time. "They were often seen together at Vauxhall and Ranelagh; the thickset little poet in butterfly brilliancy of colours, and the quiet painter in sober black or brown. Sir Joshua would leave the high play and high-life jokes and scandal to enjoy the shilling rubber and the homely company at the Devil or the Globe in Goldsmith's society." *Life* by Leslie and Taylor, i. 364. And see *post*, Chap. xix.

† Besides the red-heeled shoes, the macaronis were distinguished in 1772 by an immense knot of artificial hair behind, a very small cocked hat, an enormous walking-stick with long tassels, and extremely close-cut jacket, waistcoat, and breeches. In the following year a very lofty head-dress was added, and an immense nosegay. And now let me show them at the gaming-table. "They began by pulling off their embroidered clothes, and put on frieze great coats, or turned their coats inside outwards for luck. They put on pieces of leather (such as are worn by footmen when they clean the knives) to save their laced ruffles; and, to guard their eyes from the light and to prevent tumbling their hair, wore high-crowned straw hats with broad brims and adorned with flowers and ribbons; masks to conceal their emotions when they played at quize. . . They borrowed great sums of Jews at exorbitant premiums. Charles Fox called his outward room, where those Jews waited till he rose, his Jerusalem Chamber." Lord John Russell's *Memorials of Fox*, i. 70-1.

‡ As I more than once hint at the youthful follies and extravagances of this great, genial, noble-hearted man, let me also remark that even thus early he blended with them tastes singularly opposite and incompatible. Horace Walpole's description of him at this very period, when he was three-and-twenty, arriving from the most desperate losses at Newmarket, sitting up all night drinking, and amazing everybody next day in the House of Commons by a speech of extraordinary eloquence and power,—is well known. I find him also, in August of the present year, deep in

anytime as exquisitely-dressed "running footmen;" is not recorded: but such were the fashionable follies of the day, indulged now and then by the gravest people." \* "Johnson often went to Ranelagh," says Mr. Maxwell, "which he deemed a place of innocent recreation." † "I am a great friend to these public amusements, sir," he said to Boswell; "they keep people from vice." ‡ Poor Goldsmith had often to repent such pleasures notwithstanding. Sir Joshua found him one morning, on entering his chambers unannounced, walking quickly about from room to room, making a foot-ball of a bundle which he deliberately kicked before him; and on inquiry found it was a masquerade dress, bought when he could ill afford it, and for which he was thus doing penance. He was too poor to have anything in his possession that was not useful to him, he said to Reynolds; and he was therefore taking out the value of his extravagance in exercise.

He had sometimes to do penance, too, in other forms. His peculiarities of person and manner would for the most part betray him, whatever his disguise might be, and he would be singled out and played upon by men who could better sustain their disguise than himself. In this way he would have to listen to gross abuse of his own writings, by the side of extravagant praise of those of others whom he most bitterly disliked. He would also overhear himself misquoted, and parodied, and at last, in the hopeless impossibility of retaliation, had been seen abruptly to quit the place amid the hardly disguised laughter of his persecutors. Among his acquaintance at this time was a Mr. James Brooke, related to the author of the *Fool of Quality*, and himself somewhat notorious for having conducted the *North Briton* for Wilkes; and of the daughter of this person, Miss Clara Brooke, who became

the study of Clarendon's *History*; and it is remarkable to observe, that, though he went to the reading of that book with those strong prepossessions against the popular party with which he started in life, he had nevertheless enough already of the spirit which soon afterwards shone forth so lustroously in him, to be dissatisfied with Clarendon's mode of thinking. "I think the style bad, and that he has a good deal of the old woman in his way of thinking, but hate the opposite party so much that it gives one a kind of partiality for him." *Selwyn's Correspondence*, iii: 2.

\* See *Chronicles of Fashion*, ii. 231.

† Boswell's *Life*, iii. 202.

afterwards resident in the family of Mr. John Taylor, we are told,\*  
 "being once annoyed at a masquerade by the noisy gaiety of

"Goldsmith, who laughed heartily at some of the jokes with  
 1771.  
 Et. 43. "which he assailed her, she was induced in answer to re-  
 "peat his own line in the *Deserted Village*,

'And the loud laugh which spoke the vacant mind.'

"Goldsmith was quite abashed at the application, and retired; as  
 "if by the word *vacant* he rather meant barren, than free from  
 "care." This last remark, it will be observed, pleasantly suggests  
 a new reading for the celebrated line, which would make it much  
 more true than the ordinary reading does.†

Other allusions to a habit of Goldsmith's, however, which did  
 not admit of even so much practical repentance as that of fre-  
 quenting masquerades, are incidentally made in the letters of the  
 time. Judge Day has mentioned that he was fond of whist, and  
 adds that he played it particularly ill; but in losing his money he  
 never lost his temper. In a run of bad luck and worse play, he  
 would fling his cards upon the floor, and exclaim, "*Byefore* George!  
 "I ought for ever to renounce thee, fickle, faithless Fortune!"  
 I have traced the origin of this card-playing to the idle days of  
 Ballymahon; and that the love of it continued to beset him, there  
 is no ground for questioning. But it may well be doubted if any-  
 thing like a grave imputation of gambling could with fairness be  
 raised upon it. Mr. Cradock, who made his acquaintance at the  
 close of this year, tells us "his greatest real fault was, that if he  
 "had thirty pounds in his pocket, he would go into certain com-

\* *Records*, i. 118.

† Some of the most famous living writers with whom I am acquainted are as  
 famous for the loud laugh as for the well-stored mind, and Johnson, we have just  
 heard, had a laugh like a rhinoceros, though what that particular laugh may be Tom  
 Davies does not explain. "Johnson," says Mrs. Piozzi, "used to say that the size of  
 "a man's understanding might always be justly measured by his mirth; and his own  
 "was never contemptible. He would laugh at a stroke of genuine humour, or sudden  
 "sally of odd absurdity, as heartily and freely as I ever yet saw any man; and  
 "though the jest was often such as few felt besides himself, yet his laugh was irre-  
 "sistible, and was observed immediately to produce that of the company, not merely  
 "from the notion that it was proper to laugh when he did, but purely out of want  
 "of power to forbear it." *Anecdotes*, 298-299.



panies in the country, and in hopes of doubling the sum, would "generally return to town without any part of it:"\* and another acquaintance tells us that the "certain companies" were supposed to be Beauclerc and men of that stamp. But this only <sup>1771.</sup> <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> provokes a smile. The class to which Beauclerc belonged were the men like Charles Fox or Lord Stavordale, Lord March or Lord Carlisle, whose nightly gains and losses at Almaek's, now taking the lead of White's, were at this time the town talk; and though Goldsmith could as little afford thirty pounds lost in as many nights at loo, as Lord Stavordale or Charles Fox eleven thousand lost by one hand at hazard,† the reproach of putting it in risk with as much recklessness does not seem really chargeable to him. When Garrick accused him of it, he was smarting under an attack upon himself, and avowedly retaliating. The extent of the folly is great enough, when merely described as the indulgence among private friends, at an utterly thoughtless cost, of a real love of card-playing. Such it seems to have been;‡ and as such it will shortly

\* *Memoirs*, i. 232.

† Lord Holland had to pay £140,000 to clear Charles's gambling debts before he was twenty-five. Gibbon describes him (in a letter to Lord Sheffield 8th Feb. 1771) on the eve of that debate for relieving the clergy from subscription to the thirty-nine articles, in which he made one of the most remarkable of his youthful speeches. "I congratulate you on the late victory of our dear mama, the Church of England. . . By the bye, Charles Fox prepared himself for that holy work, by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotion cost him only about five hundred pounds an hour,—in all, eleven thousand pounds." "The young men of the age," writes Horace Walpole, "lose five, ten, fifteen thousand pounds in an evening there. Lord Stavordale" (he was the eldest son of Lord Ilchester), "not one-and-twenty, lost eleven thousand there, last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard. He swore a great oath—'Now if I had been playing deep, I might have won millions.' His cousin, Charles Fox, shines equally there and in the House of Commons. He was twenty-one yesterday se'nnight; and is already one of our best speakers. Yesterday he was made a Lord of the Admiralty." *Letters to Mann*, ii. 81-82. In another letter he illustrates more whimsically the foibles of the hopeful young squadron of macaronis. "I must tell you of a set of young men of fashion, who, dining lately at the St. Alban's tavern, thought the noise of the coaches troublesome. They ordered the street to be littered with straw, as is done for women that lie in. The bill from the Haymarket amounted to fifty shillings a-piece: methinks I am glad the Carabiniers and the Grenadiers of France are cashiered,—the sight of them before a tavern would make our young men miscarry."

‡ I find no authority for supposing that gambling to any extent went on in the rooms which were open at this time on the site of the once celebrated Button's (now forming part of the Hummums), and to which the following allusion occurs in a



meet us at the Bunburys', the Chambers's, and other houses he visited; where, poorer than any one he was in the habit of meeting, he invariably played worse than any one, generally <sup>1771.</sup> lost, and always more than he could afford to lose. Let no <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> reproach really merited be withheld, in yet connecting the habit with a worthier inducement than the love of mad excitement or of miserable gain. "I am sorry," said Johnson, "I have not learned to play at cards. It is very useful in life. It generates kindness, and consolidates society."\* If that innocent design was ever the inducement of any man, it may fairly be assumed for Goldsmith.

His part in his *English History* completed, there was nothing to prevent his betaking himself to the country; but it was not for amusement he now went there. He was resolved again to write for the theatre. His necessities were the first motive; but the determination to try another fall with sentimental comedy no doubt very strongly influenced him. Poor Kelly's splendid career had come to a somewhat ignominious close. No sooner had his sudden success given promise of a rising man, than the hacks of the

preface by Mr. Till, a coin-dealer, to a book entitled *Descriptive Particulars of English Coronation Medals*. "The room in which I conduct my business, as a coin-dealer" (17, Russell-street, then), "is that which in 1764 became the card-room and place of meeting for many of the now illustrious dead, till 1768, when a voluntary subscription among its members induced Mr. Haines, the proprietor, to take in the next room westward as a coffee-room; and the whole floor, *en suite*, was converted into card and conversation rooms. Here assembled Doctor Johnson, Garrick, Murphy, Doctor Dodd, Doctor Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Foote, Moody, Count Bruhl, Sir Philip Francis, George Colman the elder, the Dukes of Northumberland and Montague, Lord Rodney, George Steevens, Warner, and many others, all of whom have long since passed to that 'bourne from whence no traveller returns.'"

\* *Boswell* (who adds, "He certainly could not mean deep play"), v. 157. At a later period, however, he had even a word to say for deep play. "Depend upon it, sir, this is mere talk. *Who* is ruined by gaming? You will not find six instances in an age. There is a strange rout made about deep play; whereas you have many more people ruined by adventurous trade, and yet we do not hear such an outcry against it." (vi. 141.) Apropos of which *Boswell* thinks it right to add, "He would sometimes in conversation maintain opinions which he was sensible were wrong, but in supporting which, his reasoning and wit would be most conspicuous. He would begin thus: 'Why, sir, as to the good or evil of card playing'—'Now,' said Garrick, 'he is thinking which side he shall take.'"

ministry laid hold of him, using him as the newspaper hack they had attempted to make of Goldsmith ; and when Garrick announced his next comedy as *A Word to the Wise*, a word to a much wider audience, exasperated by his servile support of their feeble <sup>771.</sup> and profligate rulers, went rapidly round the town and sealed <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> poor Kelly's fate. His play was hardly listened to.\* His melancholy satisfaction was that he had fallen before liberty and Wilkes, not before laughter and wit ; but the sentence was a decisive one. Passed at Drury-lane in 1770, he had, with a new play, attempted its reversal at Covent-garden in the present year ; but to little better purpose, though his name had been carefully concealed, and " a young American clergyman not yet arrived in England " put forward as the author. On the fall of Hugh Kelly, however, there had arisen a more formidable antagonist in the person of Richard Cumberland. He came into the field with every social advantage. He was the son and great-grandson of a bishop ; his mother was the celebrated Bentley's daughter ; he had himself held a fellowship of Trinity ; and, connected as private secretary with Lord Halifax, he had passed through the subordinate political offices, when weariness of waiting for promotion turned his thoughts to the stage. His first comedy, ushered in by a prologue in which he attacked all contemporary dramatists and complimented Garrick as " the immortal actor," was played at Covent-garden ; and Garrick being present, and charmed with the unexpected compliment (for in earlier days he had rejected a tragedy by Cumberland), Fitzherbert, in whose box he was, made the author and actor known to each other, a sudden friendship was struck up, and

\* See *ante*, p. 71 and 91-94. Here I may quote what is said of Kelly, by Tom Davies, in regard to both his rapid changes of fortune. On the whole it is very creditable to him, as are other traits which will appear at the close of my narrative. " No man ever profited more by a sudden change of fortune in his favour ; prosperity " caused an immediate and remarkable alteration in his whole conduct : from a low, " petulant, absurd, and ill-bred censurer, he was transformed to the humane, affable, " good-natured, well-bred man. . . . The fate of his comedies was as uncommon as " his sudden elevation from distress to affluence was surprising." Mr. Davies means that they tumbled down as rapidly as their author was raised up. *Life of Garrick*, ii. 145-6.

Cumberland's second comedy was secured for Drury-lane. This was the *West Indian*; produced with decisive success in the present year, and an unquestionably strong reinforcement of the sentimental style. Cumberland thought himself, indeed, the creator of his own school, and ignored the existence of poor Kelly; but that was one of many weaknesses he afterwards more fully developed, and which Sheridan amusingly satirised in Sir Fretful Plagiary. He vouchsafed ridiculous airs of patronage to men who stood confessedly above him; professed a lofty indifference to criticism that tortured him; abused those dramatists most heartily whose notions he was readiest to borrow; and had a stock of conceit and self-complacency which was proof against every effort to diminish it. Goldsmith discovered all this, long before Sheridan; subtly insinuated it in those famous lines,

Here Cumberland lies having acted his parts,  
The Terence of England, the mender of hearts;  
A flattering painter, who made it his care,  
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.  
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,  
And Comedy wonders at being so fine!  
Like a tragedy queen he has dizen'd her out,  
Or rather like Tragedy giving a rout.  
His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd  
Of virtues and feelings, that Folly grows proud;  
And coxcombs, alike in their failings alone,  
Adopting his portraits, are pleased with their own.  
Say, where has our poet this malady caught?  
Or wherefore his characters thus without fault?  
Say, was it that vainly directing his view  
To find out men's virtues, and finding them few,  
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,  
He grew lazy at last—and drew from himself?

which were written in a spirit of exquisite persiflage at once detected by the lively Mrs. Thrale;\* and lived to receive amusing confirmation of its truth in Cumberland's grave gratitude for these very verses. He had not discovered their real meaning, even

\* Mr. Boaden, in his *Life of Kemble*, tells us that "Mrs. Piozzi used to give as an instance of the danger of irony, the character of Cumberland in Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, which had, by all who did not know the Doctor, been taken for serious commendation."

when he wrote his *Memoirs* five-and-thirty years later. He remained still grateful to Goldsmith for having laughed at him; and so cordial and pleasant is the laughter, that his mistake may perhaps fairly be forgiven.

1771.  
Æt. 43.

Nevertheless, Goldsmith was now conscious of an opponent in the author of the *West Indian* who challenged his utmost exertion; and, eager again to make it in behalf of the merriment, humour, and character of the good old school of comedy\* (Colman so far encouraged this purpose, as to revive the *Good-natured Man* for a night or two during the run of the *West Indian*), withdrew to the quiet of a country lodging to pursue his labour undisturbed. The Shoemaker's Paradise was no longer his; but he continued his liking for the neighbourhood, and took a single room in a farmer's house near the six mile stone on the Edgeware-road. It so suited his modest wants and means, and he liked the farmer's family so much, that he returned to it in the following summer to write his *Natural History*, "carrying down his books in two returned post 'chaises;'" and it was then that Boswell's curiosity was moved to go and see the place, taking with him Mr. Mickle, translator of the *Lusiad*, and author of the ballad of *Cumnor Hall*.† "Gold-

\* "He told one or two of his friends," says Cooke, "that he would try the dramatic 'taste of the town once more, but that he would still hunt after nature and humour 'in whatever walks of life they were most conspicuous.'" *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 173. Another friend, to whom he afterwards gave the same assurance, tells us also the reply he had made to the sneer which "some authors" hinted to him "that for 'a man to write genteel comedy it was necessary that he should be well acquainted 'with high life himself.'" "True," said Goldsmith; "and if any of you have a 'character of a truly elegant lady in high life, who is neither a coquette nor a prude, 'I hope you will favour me with it.'" Cradock's *Memoirs*, iv. 282.

† William Julius Mickle,—originally a compositor for the press, and a man of real merit, of some of whose imitations of the old ballad Walter Scott held that they were better than old ballads themselves,—in his Dissertation prefixed to the *Lusiad*, after adding Dr. Johnson to the number of those whose kindness for the man and good wishes for the translator call for the sincerest gratitude, says, "Nor must a 'tribute to the memory of Doctor Goldsmith be neglected. He saw a part of this 'version, but he cannot now receive the thanks of the translator." In the brief memoir of Mickle, in which I find this passage quoted, it is also said that both Johnson and Goldsmith had contemplated translating the *Lusiad*, but that "other 'avocations prevented." Mickle got into an unfortunate dispute with Garrick about a tragedy recommended by Boswell, and not worth the heart-burnings it caused. *Life of Johnson*, v. 91.



"smith was not at home; but having a curiosity to see his apartment we went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals, scrawled upon the wall with a black-lead pencil."

<sup>1771.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 43.</sup> Seeing these, Boswell doubtless would remind his friend of what he had heard Johnson say, "Goldsmith, sir, will give us a very fine book upon the subject; but if he can distinguish a cow from a horse, that, I believe, may be the extent of his knowledge of natural history,"\* and very probably he would proceed to ascertain, by closer examination of the black-lead scrawls, whether or not that distinction had yet been thoroughly mastered.

It is very certain that Goldsmith began with quite imperfect knowledge the labour which was now his country occupation; but perhaps neither Johnson nor any other of his friends knew the pains he had been taking to supply his defects, and the surprise he was thus preparing for them he unhappily did not live himself to enjoy. He had not forgotten his fishing and otter-hunting

\* *Life*, vi. 209. In like manner Miss Hawkins reports Johnson saying *after* the publication of the work (*Memoirs*, i. 294), "You are not to infer from this compilation Goldsmith's knowledge on the subject; if he knows that a cow has horns, it is as much as he does know." But I have no doubt that this was simply copied from Boswell, and confused with what the latter adds, in the same page of his book, about Goldsmith having transcribed Buffon's mistake as to a cow shedding her horns every two years. I may add another anecdote connected with the same subject, which the painter Haydon derived from a very old lady whom he met in Devonshire, no other than the younger of Sir Joshua Reynolds's nieces (the Miss Palmers, of whom the elder became Marchioness of Thomond), who married Mr. Gwatkin, died only very recently, and must have been at this time about fourteen or fifteen years old. She was eighty-nine when Mr. Haydon met her eight years ago, and he describes her figure as "fine and elastic, upright as a dart, with nothing of decrepitude; certainly extraordinary for a woman in her eighty-ninth year. . . . We had a delightful chat about Burke, Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, and Reynolds. She said that she came to Sir Joshua quite a girl, and at the first grand party Dr. Johnson stayed, as he always did, after all were gone; and that she, being afraid of hurting her new frock, went upstairs, and put on another, and came down to sit with Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua. Johnson thundered out at her, scolded her for her disrespect to him, in supposing he was not as worthy of her best frock as fine folks. He sent her crying to bed, and took a dislike to her ever after. She had a goldfinch which she had left at home. Her brother and sister dropped water on it from a great height, for fun. The bird died from fright, and turned black. She told Goldsmith, who was writing his *Animated Nature*. Goldsmith begged her to get the facts, and he would allude to it. 'Sir,' roared out Johnson, 'if you do, you'll ruin your work, for, depend upon it, it's a lie.'" Haydon's *Autobiography*, lii. 286-7. (1853.)

“when a boy” in Ireland; or the nest of the heron, “built near a school-house” he well knew; or the five young bats he had found in one hole together; or the great Irish wolf-dog he took such pleasure in describing; or his absorbing interest in the seals, <sup>1771.</sup> <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> kept by a gentleman known to him in that early time. At the Tower in London he was himself well known for his frequent visits to the “Lions” there, and with the Queen’s menagerie at Buckingham-gate he was as perfectly familiar; in the former place he had been at no small pains to measure “through the bars” and “as well as I could” an enormous tiger, and in the latter he had narrowly escaped a kick from a terrified zebra. Many such amusing experiences are set down in his volumes, which, whatever their defects of information may be, are at least thoroughly impressed with the love of nature and natural objects, with a delighted enjoyment of the beauties and wonders of creation, and with that devoutly unaffected sense of religion, that cheerful and continual piety, which such contemplations inspire. We hardly need to be told, after reading the book, that almost all of it was written in the country, either at Hyde, or at Kingsbury,\* or in some other rural place near London: and, as we observe its occasional humorous notices of things to be seen at country fairs, of the giants, the dwarfs, or other vagrant notabilities with which he has “sometimes conversed,” the possibility occurs that if Boswell and his friend could have ascertained from the farmer’s family the exact road which ‘The Gentleman (as they called their lodger) had taken, he might have been discovered in some adjoining lane or common, questioning the proprietor of a travelling booth; hearing a highly accomplished raven “sing the Black Joke with great distinctness, “truth, and humour;” † listening to that “ridiculous duet” be-

\* “At Kingsbury (Middlesex) Doctor Goldsmith lodged whilst composing his *Animated Nature*.” *Gent. Mag.* lxxxviii. 116.

† However, this raven did not turn his accomplishments to such excellent practical use as another bird of Goldsmith’s acquaintance, as to which he relates this anecdote. “I have seen a parrot, belonging to a distiller, who had suffered pretty largely in his circumstances from an Informer who lived opposite him, very ridiculously employed. “This bird was taught to pronounce the ninth commandment ‘Thou shalt not bear “false witness against thy neighbour,’ with a very clear, loud, articulate voice.

tween the giant and the dwarf which was so popular at the time among the country labourers and their children ; observing the man without hands or legs convert his stumps to the most convenient purposes ; marvelling to see two white negroes born of black parents ; laughing at the monkey amusing itself in imposing on the gravity of a cat ; unspeakably amazed when he first saw the size of the elephant ; admiring the canary-bird that had been taught, at the word of command, to pick up letters of the alphabet so as to spell any person's name in company ; attracted by the hare on his hind legs with such " a remarkable good ear," who used his forepaws as hands, beat the drum, danced to music, and went through the manual exercise ; and, though doubting the " credibility of the person who showed " the bonassus, and thus letting him feel that a showman's tricks would not always pass upon travellers, yet not the less ready with a pleasant candour to admit that he had " seen sheep that would eat flesh, and a horse " that was fond of oysters." \*

Such experiences as these we must doubtless carry with us, if we would also understand the somewhat strange unconsciousness with which, in this pleasant *Natural History* book, even greater marvels and conjectures yet more original were quietly accepted ; as where he throws out grave intimation of the perfect feasibility of improving the breed of the zebra into an animal for common use " as large as the horse, as fleet, as strong, and much more " beautiful ; " or where, speaking of the ostrich, he seriously indulges the expectation that " posterity may avail themselves of " this creature's abilities ; and riding upon an ostrich may one day " become the favourite, as it most certainly is the swiftest, mode " of conveyance." And in like manner, when he gravely relates the story of the Arabian Caliph who marked with an iron ring a

" The bird was generally placed in its cage over against the informer's house, and " delighted the whole neighbourhood with its persevering exhortations." *Animated Nature*, iv. 213.

\* For these various personal allusions in the order in which I have introduced them, see *Animated Nature*, iii. 240-3, iv. 315, iii. 229, 19-21, 257-62, ii. 405, 413, 212, 109, iv. 174, ii. 103-110, iii. 329, ii. 94-5, iii. 310, 334, iv. 31, iii. 122, ii. 246, and 160. And for further notices see *post*, 302-306, and chaps. xvi. and xvii.



dolphin caught in the Mediterranean, and so identified it for the selfsame dolphin caught afterwards in the Red Sea (i. 220); when he gives Margrave's account of the orderly deliberations and debates of the Ouarines (iii. 307); when he transcribes from <sup>1771.</sup>  
<sub>Æt. 43.</sub> a letter in the German *Ephemerides* the details of a fight between an enormous serpent and a buffalo, wherein the bones of the latter, as the folds of his enemy entwine him, are heard to crack as loud as the report of a cannon (v. 337); when he tells what he has found in Father Labat of the monkey's mode of managing an oyster in the tropics, how he will pick up a stone and clap it between the opening shells, and then return at leisure to eat the fish up at his ease (iii. 308); when he relates the not less marvellous manner in which the same sort of intelligent monkey manages at his pleasure to enjoy a fine crab, by putting his tail in the water, letting it be seized, and drawing out with a violent jerk the victim of his appetite (*Ibid*); when he repeats what he has heard of Patagonian horses not more than fourteen hands high, carrying men nine feet high (ii. 109); when he tells Gesner's story of the hungry pike seizing the mule's nose (v. 158), or the more marvellous story in which Gesner celebrates the two nightingales who were heard repeating what they had overheard of a long and not remarkably decent conversation between a drunken tapster and his wife, as well as of the talk of two travellers about an impending war against the Protestants (iv. 257-60): in all these, and many other instances, notwithstanding his care to give in every case his authorities, it is too manifest that for his own part he sees nothing that may not be believed. Indeed, he avouches his belief at times in very amusing ways; nor is it possible to refrain from smiling at the gravity with which, after reporting a Munchausen relation about all the dogs of a Chinese village turning out for pursuit and attack when they happen to see a man walking through the street whose trade it is to kill and dress them, he adds: "This I should hardly have believed but that I have seen more than one instance of it among ourselves. I have seen a poor fellow who made a practice of stealing and killing dogs for their skins, pursued in



“ full cry for three or four streets together by all the bolder breed of dogs, while the weaker flew from his presence with affright “ . . . *such is the fact* ” (ii. 213-14). Nevertheless, perhaps the <sup>1771.</sup> cautious reader will be as little disposed to accept it for a fact <sub>ÆL. 43.</sub> as to believe that other marvel, which “ as it comes from a “ variety of the most credible witnesses, we cannot refuse our assent ” to (iii. 295), about the baboons who have such a love for women that they will attack a village when they know the men are engaged in their rice-harvest, assail the poor deserted wives in a body, force them into the woods, keep them there against their wills, and kill them when refractory ! In justice to him let me add, however, that when, of the same class of imitative creatures, he protests his inability to see why monkeys should not be able to conduct debates and deliberations in quite as orderly a manner as any civilised human assembly, his remark had probably more of intended sarcasm than of undesigned absurdity in it.\* At this very time his friend Burke was subjected nightly to interruptions in the House of Commons that really would have been discreditable to an assembly of apes.

But leaving him to the amusing mistakes and simple enjoyments in natural history which occupied him in his country home, events which preceded the publication of his *English History* bring us back for awhile to London.

\* One more passage, not less amusing than any I have thus referred to, I must subjoin. It is Goldsmith's introduction into his *Natural History* of one of the Edinburgh professors. Discoursing of the under jaw, and the influences upon it of passion or of languor, he says : “ Every one knows how very sympathetic this kind “ of languid motion is ; and that for one person to yawn is sufficient to set all the “ rest of the company a yawning. A ridiculous instance of this was commonly “ practised upon the famous McLaurin, one of the professors at Edinburgh. He was “ very subject to have his jaw dislocated ; so that when he opened his mouth wider “ than ordinary, or when he yawned, he could not shut it again. In the midst of “ his harangues, therefore, if any of his pupils began to be tired of his lecture, he “ had only to gape, or yawn, and the professor instantly caught the sympathetic “ affection ; so that he thus continued to stand speechless, with his mouth wide open. “ till his servant, from the next room, was called in to set his jaw again.” (i. 415-6.) As might have been expected, a note appeared in the second edition to the effect that the editor had been “ credibly informed ” that the professor had *not* the defect mentioned !

## CHAPTER XI.

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EDMUND BURKE.

1771.

THIS brief chapter I devote chiefly to Edmund Burke, not only because the part he has played in my narrative requires that such a sequel should be given, but because the reader should also have the means of observing what now fell within the <sup>1771.</sup> observation of Goldsmith, and led to that imaginary epitaph <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> in which the whole career as well as character of his friend was expressed, in which with a singular forecast all the future was seen from the present, and the loftiest admiration only served with exquisite art to indicate defects which were to spring, as too surely and soon they did, from the very wealth and exuberance of this great man's genius.

Burke had just resumed those former-occupations at Beaconsfield into which he threw himself with as much energy as if they had been party politics, after a session of unprecedented violence, but which had not ended in vehement speeches alone. Impelled and supported by the excitement out of doors, which had risen to an unexampled pitch, and high above whose loudest storm the triumphant thunder of Junius was heard rattling against the Treasury benches, he, and the minority with whom he acted, had been able at last to crush Lord North's majorities. The battle of the session was fought upon the right of the press to publish reports of what was passing in Parliament; and if Junius and Wilkes had done nothing more than help us to a few years' earlier enjoyment of

that popular right, such brawling mischief as undoubtedly attended them might claim to have received some sort of expiation. It was in vain that Lord North walked out into the lobby with his splendid majorities; the opposition went back two hundred years for a precedent, and, strong in public opinion, invoked the orders of the House against its own tyranny. On the question of bringing what Colonel Onslow, with a proper sense of sport, called "three brace"\* of printers to the bar, Burke and Barré divided three-and-twenty times; and when they left at the close of the struggle, between five and six o'clock in the morning of Saturday, the 12th of March, they knew that the privilege was won. "Posterity," exclaimed Burke at the next meeting of the House, "will bless the pertinaciousness of that day."† In which faith he was quite content to receive the abuse of his contemporaries.

It was not sparing. Conway recommended him to carry that line of tactics in future to Hockley in the Hole.‡ Charles Fox grieved that he should turn the House into a bear-garden.§ George Onslow asked what else but ignorance of its orders could the House expect from a man who was not descended from parliamentary men. Burke owned that insolent impeachment. "I am *not* descended from members of parliament," he said. "I am *not* descended from any distinguished character whatever. My father left me nothing in the world but good principles, good

\* *Cavendish Debates*, ii. 378.

† *Ibid.* The day was the 14th March, 1771.

‡ Says Mrs. Peachum to Filch, "You should go to Hockley in the Hole, and to Marybone, child, to learn valour. These are the schools that have bred so many brave men." *Beggars' Opera* (Ed. 1729), 7. Hockley in the Hole was the place for encounters in the ring. It is now a part of Clerkenwell-green. "In the phrase of Hockley in the Hole," writes Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, laughing at Boswell's shrinking from his once eagerly proposed Baltic expedition, "it is a pity he has not a better bottom." Mrs. Piozzi's *Letters*, i. 367.

§ Yet Charles Fox soon changed his tone; and Horace Walpole does not scruple to say that his motives were his father's application for an earldom, and his uncle Ilchester's for a place in which to put O'Brien out of the way: both received unfavourably by Lord North. Who would suppose that the poor actor's *bonne fortune* (*ante*, i. 353 5) would have proved such a sad piece of *ill-fortune* to all the great people it so sorely discomposed? But the incident is really one of the most characteristic of the time, showing as it does what important acts hinged on motives the most contemptible. See Lord John Russell's *Memorials of Fox*, i. 16, and 74-5; and the *Selwyn Correspondence*, iii. 51.

"instruction, good example, which I have not departed from." Nor was it in the House alone, or simply upon public grounds, that such attacks were made.\* A churchman, Dr. Markham, who had been his own early associate and was godfather to his son, had lately received a mitre from Lord Mansfield, and

1771.  
Æt. 43.

\* No man in public life was ever subjected to more unscrupulous attacks on his private character than Burke. In the very year to which I have brought my narrative, so foul was the bitterness of party strife, that even the respectable *Advertiser* opened its columns to the most gross imputations on "the brothers and their cousin" (by which expression Edmund and Richard Burke, and their relative William, were well understood), as part of a "knot of knaves" engaged in disreputable schemes to raise the price of India bonds. Unfortunately a certain colour had been given to such charges by the undoubted fact that William and Richard Burke, with their friend Dyer and others, had speculated in the new stock and lost considerably. It involved poor Dyer's utter bankruptcy; and Hawkins alludes either to William or Edmund Burke, whom he always does his best to avoid naming directly, when he remarks that "the last office of humanity towards him was performed by one of those who had been accessory to his ruin." (*Life of Johnson*, 231.) But Edmund afterwards most solemnly averred that he was not himself involved in these transactions, and I implicitly believe him. Even the statement which Mr. Nicholls makes in his *Recollections and Reflections* (i. 54-5), and which I quote as the sum of what one of the bitterest of Burke's opponents could collect and retail on this head, he is obliged to confess, "I know only from 'the relation of others,' though he adds, 'I believe it to be true.' Here it is. 'Soon after Mr. Edmund Burke became a political character, he, and his cousin 'William Burke, embarked in a speculation in India stock. They prevailed on 'many of their friends to join them, among others, on Earl Verney' (Verney was an Irish peer, who represented Buckinghamshire in several later parliaments, but at this time sat for Carmarthen), 'who fell a victim to this connection. They used 'much solicitation with Sir Joshua Reynolds to join them, but he was dissuaded 'from it by Anthony Chamier, for which Anthony Chamier, as he told me himself, 'was never forgiven by the Burkes.'" (How loose and little to be depended upon are assertions so worded, under which Edmund may or may not be included, needs not be pointed out.) "This speculation was at first extremely successful, but at 'last it failed. William Burke and Lord Verney were announced as the defaulters; 'and Edmund Burke's name was concealed." Yet the man who wrote this passage, on mere hearsay, took afterwards an active personal part against Burke in the House of Commons on the impeachment of Hastings, whom he was put forward to defend against two of the leading charges; and is it credible that with the desperate resentments which then sprang up against the originator of that impeachment, and which arrayed against him in unrelenting animosity the countless clients and satellites of the still powerful ex-Governor-General, Burke could have remained uncrushed by the *proof* of imputations of that kind, if any means of proof existed?—Since this note was written, I have regretted to observe these scandals against Burke revived by an able and well-informed writer in the *Athenæum* (17th December, 1853), who finds it difficult otherwise to account for his purchase of Gregories so soon after his entrance into political life, &c. As this writer, however, does not carry the matter beyond the sort of suspicion already remarked upon above, I will



abuse of his seventeen years' friend might seem to have been the condition of the gift. He called Burke a bear-garden railer and declaimer; charged his companions with the malignity of treason, and himself with things dangerous and desperate; told him the world cried out against such arrogance in a man of his condition, and warned him against turning his house into a *hole of adders*.\* The ministry seconded these exertions of

only add, as to the Beaconsfield purchase, and the sudden rise into political notoriety, what we receive on even the unfavourable testimony of the *Recollections and Reflections* above quoted. Nicholls says that, on Lord Rockingham first coming into office, his inexperience in regard to public business was such as to render it absolutely necessary to have a person about him acquainted with political subjects, and accustomed to laborious application, and that every one felt the selection of Burke to be a discreet and natural one at that time. "He was an author in the service of Mr. Dodsley the bookseller; he had conducted for that gentleman the *Annual Register*," &c. . . "His political knowledge might be considered almost as an *Encyclopædia*." . . "Every man who approached him received instruction from his stores; and his failings were not visible at that time," &c. &c. . . "When Mr. Burke entered into the service of the Marquis of Rockingham he was not rich, but "the munificent generosity of that nobleman," &c. &c. . . "Mr. Burke purchased a beautiful villa at Beaconsfield, which was paid for by the Marquis of Rockingham," &c. . . "But his liberality was not confined to the person of Mr. Burke; he procured for Mr. William Burke, his cousin and most confidential connexion, the employment of Under Secretary of State to General Conway; and he gave to Mr. Edmund Burke's brother, Richard Burke, the place of Collector to the Customs at Grenada. I mention these circumstances to show," &c. &c. (i. 20-21.) Nicholls had at least the means of knowing personally what he thus relates, for with Lord Rockingham he was in the habit of personal intercourse. He was the son of George the Second's physician, and sat in three parliaments in George the Third's reign. I may add that Richard Burke had already gone out to the West India Islands before his brother's formal connection with Lord Rockingham: a fact which might perhaps be so construed as to explain some apparent inconsistencies in the date of his appointment. On the 17th July, 1764, Edmund announces to their friend Shackleton that "poor Dick" was to set off the next week for the Grenadas; and he proceeds to write of the uncertainty of his prospects, and of the impending voyage as an attempt to improve them, in a style which I cannot help thinking incompatible with the fact of any certain or settled appointment having as yet been obtained for him. "But it must be submitted to," Burke finely adds. "A peaceable, honourable, and affluent decline of life, must be purchased by a laborious or hazardous youth; and every day I think, more and more, that it is well worth the purchase." (*Correspondence*, i. 53-4.) At what would be pretty nearly the date of "poor Dick's" appointment to the Customs, if contemporaneous with his brother's acceptance under Lord Rockingham, Richard was again in London, and soon again, of course, he returned to Grenada. (1853.)

\* See *Correspondence* of Burke, i. 297-305. Mr. Croker may be accepted as a good authority on this point, and even he does not hesitate to say: "Markham and Burke had been intimate political as well as private friends, but when the prospect

its zealous supporters, and went about to fasten *Junius* upon him. Their papers had been rife with that suspicion ever since the letters began. Even the whigs became alarmed, and sent the brother of Tommy Townshend to obtain his formal disclaimer. Burke gave it, though not without reluctant and galled submission to the right implied in demanding it;\* and was thenceforth, beyond all question, to be for ever held acquitted of the charge. "Sir," said Johnson, "I should have believed Burke to be Junius, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these letters; but Burke spontaneously denied it to me."†

Better, however, than even such spontaneous denial, and satisfactory where Townshend's disclaimer had failed to satisfy, should have been the evidence afforded by the letters themselves. This was the year when Garrick, smiling and happy amid the great who fondled and flattered him; sending meddling messages to the palace that Junius would write no more; writing himself to "Carissimo mio Edmundo" that what alone prevents their meeting is a gouty twinge in the knee, from "dining yesterday with

"of high church preferment opened upon Markham, he seems to have broken off from Mr. Burke as too violent a politician." *Croker's Bos.* 274.

\* His first letter was not thought sufficiently distinct in its denial by Townshend. He then sent another. "Surely my situation is a little vexations, and not a little singular. I am, it seems, called upon to disown the libels in which I am myself satirised as well as others. If I give no denial, things are fixed upon me which are not, on many accounts very honourable to me. If I deny, it seems to be giving satisfaction to those to whom I owe none and intend none. In this perplexity all I can do is, to satisfy you, and to leave you to satisfy those whom you think worthy of being informed. I have, I dare say, to nine-tenths of my acquaintance, denied my being the author of Junius, or having any knowledge of the author, as often as the thing was mentioned, whether in jest or earnest, in style of disapprobation or of compliment. Perhaps I may have omitted to do so to you, in any formal manner, as not supposing you to have any suspicion of me. I now give you my word and honour that I am not the author of Junius, and that I know not the author of that paper, and I do authorize you to say so. This will, I suppose, be enough, without showing my letter." *Burke's Correspondence*, i. 274-5.

† *Boswell*, vii. 2. Johnson added: "The case would have been different had I asked him if he was the author; a man so questioned, as to an anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it." See Lord John Russell's note to Moore's *Diary*, vi. 30.

“an archbishop;” \*—found himself, in that supreme prosperity, suddenly and contemptuously struck in the face with a blow that appalled him. To believe that Burke’s was the hand so lifted against his friend; that the “vagabond” was told to “keep  
 1771.  
 Æt. 43. “to his pantomimes,” by one who so lately had confessed the dearest obligations to him; † would be to fix upon Burke an incredible imputation of dishonour. I do not even believe that, if he had taken any part in the letters (though far from asserting that some portion of the secret may not have fallen into his reluctant keeping), he would have continued to sit down at their common club-table, in all the frankness of familiar intercourse, with the well-abused Anthony Chamier. The stronger presumption is, that in his ordinary daily duties in the War-office, Chamier sat much nearer *Junius* than ever he sat in Gerrard-street. ‡

\* May 3, 1771. Burke’s *Correspondence*, i. 253.

† See *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 353-4. It is quite certain that as late as March 1775 Johnson was still in the habit of professing his belief in Burke’s authorship. Reporting a conversation at Thrale’s in that month, when he dined twice with Johnson and Baretti, Dr. Thomas Campbell (*Visit to England in 1775*: Sydney, 1854) writes: “Johnson said that he looked upon Burke to be the author of *Junius*, and “that though he would not take him *contra mundum*, yet he would take him against any man. Baretti was of the same mind, though he mentioned a fact which made “against the opinion; which was, that a paper having appeared against *Junius* on “this day, a *Junius* came out in answer to that the very next, when everybody “knew Burke was in Yorkshire. But all the *Juniuses* were evidently not written “by the same hand.”

‡ There is a curious account of Francis by one who knew him well, in Nicholls’s *Recollections and Reflections* (i. 280, 291, &c.) He takes several occasions to repeat the idea with which he came to be impressed, as to the extraordinary abilities of Francis, to whom he was politically opposed, and he adds: “Strong resentment was “a leading feature in his character. I have heard him avow this sentiment more “openly and more explicitly, than I ever heard any other man avow it in the whole “course of my life.” Of course Nicholls never connected him with *Junius*. I take the opportunity of appending a striking argument from a letter of Mr. Macaulay’s (published in Lord Mahon’s *History*, v. App. xxxii.), commenting on a recent attempt to disconnect Francis from *Junius*. “It is odd that the reviewer should “infer from the mistake about Draper’s half-pay that *Junius* could not have been in “the War-office. I talked that matter over more than ten years ago, when I was “Secretary-at-War, with two of the ablest and best informed gentlemen in the “department; and we all three came to a conclusion the very opposite of that at “which the reviewer has arrived. Francis was chief clerk in the English War-office. “Everybody who drew half-pay through that office made the declaration which “*Junius* mentions. But Draper’s half-pay was on the Irish establishment; and of “him the declaration was not required. Now, to me and to those whom I con-



But, in clearing Burke from this remarkable authorship, which would have detracted from his character what it added to his fame (for it matters little that the hilt of your rapier should be diamond-studded and its blade of unequalled temper, if you <sup>1771.</sup> dare not use it excepting in the dark), it is not so easy to clear <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> him of having so shaped his course somewhat later, as to show that he still winced from the charge. Now was the time, profiting by the opportunities of George Grenville's death and the general party confusion created by Wilkes and Junius, to have freed both himself and the Rockinghams; now was the time to have so enlarged the battle-field for both as to bring in issue something greater than the predominance of whig families with whig principles: yet even now, while his was the solitary voice that invoked retribution for the most infamous crime of nations, the partition of Poland, he had no thought or wish to throw for a higher stake in politics and government than a premiership for Rockingham and a paymastership (without seat in the cabinet) for himself.\* "My dear Lord," he said to the Duke of Richmond, "you dissipate your mind with 'too great a variety of minute pursuits.'" "My dear Burke,"

"sulted, it seemed the most natural thing in the world that Francis, relying on his official knowledge, and not considering that there might be a difference between the practice at Dublin and the practice at Westminster, should put that unlucky question which gave Draper so great an advantage. I have repeatedly pointed out this circumstance to men who are excellent judges of evidence, and I never found one who did not agree with me." Let me add to what I formerly remarked (*ante*, 69-70), that I can give no stronger evidence of my faith in Francis's authorship of Junius having survived all the many ingenious surmises of recent critics, than that, knowing Francis could not have written both those letters and a pamphlet entitled *Letter to a Brigadier-General*, published ten years earlier, I yet continue to think he was Junius. The style is remarkably similar, but conclusions founded on such comparisons are always unsafe. (1852.) See *ante*, 73-74. (1870.)

\* What Goldsmith would have said of such a consummation to all Burke's labours and services, had he lived to see it, may be inferred from the language of his epitaph. Boswell gives us amusing evidence, by an allusion in one of his letters to Burke, that at this time any possible party triumph of the whigs and patriots could mean nothing, according to Goldsmith, if not a deification of Burke, their leading orator, their first of men. "Dear Sir," he writes (3rd March, 1778), "upon my honor, I began a letter to you some time ago, and did not finish it, because I imagined you were then near your *apotheosis*—as poor Goldsmith said upon a former occasion, when he thought your party was coming into administration." *Burke Corresp.* ii. 207.



said the Duke to him, "you have more merit than any man in keeping us together." And with that he was content. He kept them together. They became in time of greater importance to <sup>1771.</sup> him than those pure principles, than that practically just and <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> disinterested policy, with which his counsels had helped first to connect them; and which, carried now to their farther verge and just extent, might have freed both the party and the country from all the trammels that distressed them. He drew himself more and more within the Rockingham ranks;\* toiled more and more to keep the popular power within a certain magic circle; and, while his genius was at work for the age that was to come, in eloquence as rich and various as its intuition seemed deep and universal, his temper was satisfied that the age in which he lived should be governed exclusively by the Richmonds and Rockinghams. "You people of great families and hereditary trusts and fortunes, the great oaks that shade a country and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation, are not like such as I am, mere annual plants that perish with our season, and leave no sort of traces behind us." And so around that perishable fancy he placed all the supports of his noble imagination; till that which he thought eternal melted from his grasp, and left what he believed to be mere transitory graces to survive and endure alone.† He lived to see the greatest event which the history of the world had witnessed (for surely this, with all salutary protest against its crimes and sympathy for its sufferings, we must hold the first French Revolution to have been), and lived even so to misjudge it. What was temporary in its terror and sin, he shrank from as eternal; what was eternal in its grandeur and heroism, he spat

\* "Lord Rockingham's Governor," Walpole calls him in 1770. *Lett. to Mann*, ii. 95.

† I cannot regard as a mere eloquently-turned sentence what he so finely says to Robertson in thanking him for his history. Here, as often elsewhere, I seem to discern his melancholy sense of the disproportion of the objects sought to the means employed, in that political struggle of the time which absorbed his wonderful powers. "Adieu, sir! Continue to instruct the world; and, whilst we carry on a poor unequal conflict with the passions and prejudices of our day, perhaps with no better weapons than other passions and prejudices of our own, convey wisdom to future generations." *Burke Correspondence*, ii. 165.

upon as the folly of a day. There was not an intellect then existing in Europe to which this sudden advent and triumph of democracy should have appealed so strongly as to Burke: yet through the mist of blood that surrounded its uprising, <sup>1771.</sup> <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> he saw nothing but a demon-dance of exaggerated horror; and the noble, the beautiful, the ornamental, he thought blotted out of France, because at last, in the hollow semblances of these things, demons that for centuries had indeed been torturing Frenchmen were strangled and overthrown.\*

The earlier and later days of Edmund Burke were nevertheless in closer sympathy than either friends or enemies have thought. He was too honest as well as great to be a renegade, though not to avoid *self-deception*; or effectually to resist those influences which all English society sanctioned, which hung around and depressed him in every step of his progress, which only at times he was able to thrust thoroughly aside, and which at last almost wholly overshadowed him. Let us measure by the uses to which the practical philosophy of his politics is still available, the nobler political uses to which, while he lived, he might have applied such genius. Its limited service is surely the proof of its misdirection. If he had not made himself the sport of his fancy and mere plaything of his imagination, instead of sovereign ruler over both, he could never have ministered throughout life, as he did, to the aristocratic requirements of these Rockinghams and Richmonds. He consented to do this, and the end was but a part of the begin-

\* His friend Philip Francis in vain remonstrated; but his letter on the proof sheets of the *Remarks on the French Revolution*, made public in the late additions to Burke's Correspondence (iii. 128-32), remains a masterpiece for us. "The loss of a single life in a popular tumult, excites individual tenderness and pity. No tears are shed for nations. When the provinces are scourged to the bone by a mercenary and merciless military power, and every drop of its blood and substance extorted from it by the edicts of a royal council, the case seems very tolerable to those who are not involved in it. When thousands after thousands are dragooned out of their country for the sake of their religion, or sent to row in the galleys for selling salt against law; when the liberty of every individual is at the mercy of every prostitute, pimp, or parasite, that has access to the hand of power, or to any of its basest substitutes; my mind, I own, is not at once prepared to be satisfied with gentle palliatives for such disorders." *Correspondence*, iii. 168-9.

ning. Already it was manifest, even thus early in his career, to one who could pierce through the over-refinings of his intellect to its unavailing and unpractical issues. Was it strange that  
 1771. Goldsmith should have been that one? Was it strange that,  
 Æt. 43. among all the men in familiar intercourse with him, or belonging to the society of which he was the leading ornament, he should first have heard the truth from that member of the circle whose opinions on such a theme perhaps all would have hailed with laughter?

Burke was only upon the threshold of his troubled though great career; he had yet to live twenty-seven years of successes in every means employed, and of failures in every object sought; when Goldsmith conceived and wrote his imaginary epitaph. But its truth was prophetic.\* Through the exquisite levity of its tone appeared a weight and seriousness of thought, which was found applicable to every later movement in Burke's subsequent life; and which now confirms, as by the judgment of his time, the unsparing verdicts of history. As yet, however, it was Goldsmith's alone. What hitherto had fallen from Johnson showed no such perception as this; and it may be doubtful if the rest knew much more of the likeness than that the statesman's long speeches *did* detain him sadly from his dinner, and that he too often arrived at table when his mutton was cold. It was not until after many years he obtained the name of the dinner-bell.

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,  
 We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much;  
 Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,  
 And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.  
 Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat  
 To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote;  
 Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,  
 And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining.

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\* "We then spoke of *Retaliation*, and praised the character of Burke in particular "as a masterpiece. Nothing that he had ever said or done but what was foretold in "It; nor was he painted as the principal figure in the foreground with the partiality "of a friend, or as the great man of the day, but with a back-ground of history, "showing both what he was and what he might have been." Hazlitt's *Conversations of Northcote*, 169-70.

Though equal to all things, for all things unfit:  
 Too nice for a statesman; too proud for a wit;  
 For a patriot, too cool; for a drudge, disobedient;  
 And too fond of the *right*, to pursue the *expedient*.  
 In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in place, sir,  
 To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

1771.

Æt. 43.

Tommy Townshend had confirmed in the last session the claim he formerly put forward to such mention here. Again he had attacked Johnson, with allusion to his pamphlet on the *Falkland Islands*, as a pensioner paid to abuse the opposition; and again Burke had remained silent, leaving his friend's defence this time to Wedderburne, a recent deserter from the whigs.\* And yet Burke might fairly enough, if less anxious at the moment for Townshend's go-between service, have spurned the charge against the great pamphleteer, that his pension had lately been increased to reward a hireling advocacy. Johnson laughed at it himself when Boswell named it to him, and said (justly enough) that Lord North had no such friendly disposition that way. But he added a curious illustration of the temper of the time. A certain "airy lady" (Peg Woffington's sister, formerly named as one of Goldsmith's personal critics, and who had married the honourable and reverend George Cholmondeley), had given him (Johnson) proof that even the private visitings of members of parliament were now watched; and when he went himself to the prime minister on the business of that pamphlet, though he went after dark and with all possible secrecy, he was quietly told in a day or two, "Well! you have "been with Lord North."†

Some such suspicion against even poor Goldsmith, unpensioned as he was, broke out on the appearance of his *English History* in August. Yet a more innocent production could hardly have been imagined. It was simply a compilation, in his easy flowing style, from four historians whom he impartially characterised in his preface; and with as little of the feeling of being influenced by any, his book throughout had been written. "They have each," he says, speak-

\* Sir James Mackintosh alleges another cause of offence in the fact of his having persisted in clearing the gallery of the House, against Burke's and Fox's remonstrance, when Garrick was present. *Boswell*, v. 214.

† *Boswell*, iv. 271-2.



ing of Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume, "their peculiar admirers, "in proportion as the reader is studious of political antiquities, fond

"of minute anecdote, a warm partizan, or a deliberate rea-

1771.  
Æt. 43. "soner."\* Nevertheless, passages of very harmless narrative were displayed in the party papers as of very questionable

\* He adds that he had particularly taken Hume for his guide, as far as Hume went; and that wherever he had abridged any passages from him, he had done it with reluctance, as he scarcely cut out a single line that did not contain a beauty. In the same preface he expresses with such charming grace and ease the principle that guided him in these abridged histories, and which renders them still so delightful, in spite of errors corrected and information extended since their first publication, that the reader will thank me for transferring some sentences to this place. After mentioning the favourable reception of his *Roman History*, and that the booksellers had told him how much they wanted an *English History* of the same kind, where the narrative, though very concise, should be not totally without interest, and the facts, though crowded, be yet distinctly seen, he proceeds: "The business of abridging the "works of others has hitherto fallen to the lot of very dull men; and the art of "blotting, which an eminent critic calls the most difficult of all others, has been "usually practised by those who found themselves unable to write. Hence our "abridgments are generally more tedious than the works from which they pretend "to relieve us; and they have effectually embarrassed that road which they laboured "to shorten. As the present compiler starts with such humble competitors, it will "scarcely be thought vanity in him if he boasts himself their superior. Of the many "abridgments of our own history, hitherto published, none seems possessed of any share "of merit or reputation; some have been written in dialogue, or merely in the stiffness "of an index, and some to answer the purposes of a party. A very small share of "taste, therefore, was sufficient to keep the compiler from the defects of the one, "and a very small share of philosophy from the misrepresentations of the other. It "is not easy, however, to satisfy the different expectations of mankind in a work of "this kind, calculated for every apprehension, and on which all are consequently "capable of forming some judgment. Some may say that it is too long to pass "under the denomination of an abridgment; and others, that it is too dry to be "admitted as a history: it may be objected that reflection is almost entirely banished "to make room for facts, and yet that many facts are wholly omitted which might "be necessary to be known. It must be confessed that all those objections are partly "true; for it is impossible in the same work at once to attain contrary advantages. "The compiler, who is stinted in room, must often sacrifice interest to brevity; and "on the other hand, while he endeavours to amuse, must frequently transgress the "limits to which his plan should confine him. Thus, all such as desire only amuse- "ment may be disgusted with his brevity; and such as seek for information may "object to his displacing facts for empty description. To attain the greatest num- "ber of advantages with the fewest inconveniences, is all that can be attained in an "abridgment, the name of which implies imperfection. It will be sufficient, there- "fore, to satisfy the writer's wishes, if the present work be found a plain, unaffected "narrative of facts, with just ornament enough to keep attention awake, and with "reflection barely sufficient to set the reader upon thinking. Very moderate abilities "were equal to such an undertaking." The art of compilation and abridgment, as thus described and practised by Goldsmith, may be called an extinct art now,

tendency ; he was asked if he meant to be the tool of a minister, as well as the drudge of a bookseller ; he was reminded that the favour of a generous public (so generous always at other people's cost) was better than the best of pensions ; and he finally was <sup>1771.</sup> warned against betraying his country "for base and scandalous pay." The poor publisher became alarmed, and a formal defence of the book appeared in the *Public Advertiser*. Tom was himself a critic, and had taken the field full-armed for his friend (and his property). "Have you seen," he says in a letter to Granger,\*

though never was there a time when so great a need existed for it. Our scholars, whether native or German, give us too much information, and too little knowledge, about everything. Everything is heaped upon us, whether of argument or research, in detail ; and till a Goldsmith arises for our Grotes and Niebuhrs, we shall never profit by their labour and their learning as we might do. As this note is passing through the press, I receive accidental proof of the esteem in which men of cultivated taste still hold these little histories and abridgments by Goldsmith, and of the suspicion with which they regard all attempts to adapt them to schools by cramming them with modern discoveries. "Where else," writes my friend the Rev. Mr. Harness to me, "will any lad from twelve to fifteen find such a glowing current of attractive information as in Goldsmith's account of Greece and Rome ? If those fellows, the Germans, have proved them to be all wrong, let there be a note to that effect, and let them be read, like romances, for the encouragement of generous and patriotic feelings—as we retain the Apocryphal Books for 'instruction of morals,' and not for 'proof of doctrine.' Those *Histories* are charming books. I have just finished the *Grecian History* ; it must be nearly fifty years since I read it last ; and I found it quite delightful. In later editions (as I see from the copy I have been reading) there has been a good deal of tampering with the text ; but all of them, *Greece, Rome, and England*, ought to be printed from the last editions published during the author's life-time" (the *Grecian History* was a posthumous publication, but he had left it nearly ready for the press) "*word for word*. I should say the same of the *Animated Nature* ; though whether a cow has two horns or three, or whether an elephant is oviparous or viviparous, is not to me a matter of the slightest moment." 1852.

\* Granger, an industrious but not very brilliant person (whom Boswell tried hard to exhibit to Johnson as untainted with whiggery, notwithstanding the patronage of Horace Walpole, vi. 217), has niched Goldsmith so oddly into his *Biographical History of England* that I may perhaps be forgiven for quoting, from one of the later editions of that successful book, the allusion here. It occurs in a note to an article on Francis Goldsmith of Gray's Inn, who died in 1655, after translating one of the minor works of Grotius. "We had lately a poet of the same name with the person just mentioned, perhaps of the same family, but by no means of the same character. His writings, in general, are much esteemed ; but his poetry is greatly admired. Few tragedies have been read with stronger emotions of pity than the distressful scenes in the *Vicar of Wakefield* ; yet we cannot but regret that the author of the *Traveller* (*decies repetita placebit*) should have undervalued his genius so far as to write a romance." *Biog. Hist.* iv. 40. What worthy Mr. Granger must have thought

“an impartial account of Goldsmith's *History of England*? If you want to know who was the writer of it, you will find him in

1771. “Russell-street: but Mum!” \*

Æt. 43.

of those dull dogs, Fielding and Smollett, who wrote hardly anything else, the reader may be left to imagine. Tom Davies published Granger's book, and made money by it; nor is it possible to read the *Letters* from which I have quoted in the text without constantly recurring laughter at the amusing airs of importance displayed by Tom to his modest, inexperienced, deferential, laborious, biographical parson. In one of the more strict letters of business, I may add, Goldsmith's name is introduced; and it may serve to show the estimation in which he now stood (13th November, 1769), that his good word in society was thought worth securing by the bribe of a presentation copy. “I have,” writes Davies, “taken all the pains I can to make your book as public as possible. The advertisements have cost me a great deal of money; and I have made presents of several copies printed on one side, in order to promote the sale of your book. I have given presents, as above, to the following gentlemen: Dr. Askew; Dr. Ducarel, of the Commons; the Rev. Mr. Bernard, a worthy clergyman in Cambridgeshire; Mr. Farmer, of Cambridge, author of the *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*; Dr. Goldsmith; the Rev. Mr. Bowle,” &c. Granger's *Letters*, 25-29.

\* Nov. 5, 1771. Granger's *Letters*, 53 54.

## CHAPTER XII.

## COUNTRY RELAXATIONS.

1771.

MEANWHILE, indifferent enough to the blustering reception vouchsafed to his very innocent *History*, Goldsmith had returned to his country lodging, had been steadily working at his new labour, had now nearly finished his comedy, and was too <sup>1771.</sup> quiet and busy in his retirement\* to be much disturbed by <sub>Æt. 43.</sub> those violent party noises elsewhere. The farm-house still stands on a gentle eminence in what is called Hyde-lane, leading to Kenton, about three hundred yards from the village of Hyde, and looking over a pretty country in the direction of Hendon; and when a biographer of the poet went in search of it some years since, he found still living in the neighbourhood the son of the farmer (a Mr. Selby) with whom the poet lodged, and in whose family the property of the house and farm remained.† He found traditions of

\* *Ante*, 261.

† I subjoin the recollections of Mr. Selby, as given in *Prior*, ii. 332-4. "Being then about sixteen years old he remembers the poet perfectly, and with some degree of pride pointed to the room where *She Stoops to Conquer* was written, a convenient and airy apartment up one pair of stairs to the right of the landing as we ascended. . . . It appears that though boarding with the family, the poet had the usual repasts commonly sent to his own apartment, where his time was chiefly spent in writing. Occasionally he wandered into the kitchen, took his stand with his back towards the fire apparently absorbed in thought, till, something seeming to occur to mind, he would hurry off, to commit it, as they supposed, to paper. Sometimes he strolled about the fields, or was seen loitering and musing under the hedges, or perusing a book. More frequently he visited town, and remained absent many weeks at a time, or paid visits to private friends in other parts of the country. In the house, he usually wore his shirt collar open in the



Goldsmith surviving, too : how he used now and then to wander into the kitchen from his own room, in fits of study or abstraction, and the parlour had to be given up to him when he had <sup>1771.</sup> visitors to tea ; how Reynolds and Johnson and Sir William <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> Chambers had been entertained there, and he had once taken the young folks of the farm in a coach to see some strolling players at Hendon ; how he had come home one night without his shoes, having left them stuck fast in a slough ; and how he had an evil habit of reading in bed, and of putting out his candle by flinging his slipper at it.\* It is certain he was fond of this humble place. He told Johnson and Boswell that he believed the farmer's family thought him an odd character, and that he was to them what "The Spectator" appeared to his landlady and her children. He was The Gentleman. And so content for the present was he to continue here, that he had given up a summer visit into Lincolnshire, proposed in company with Reynolds, to see their friend Langton in his new character of Benedict. The latter had married, the previous year, one of those *three* Countess Dowagers of Rothes who had all of them the fortune to get second husbands at about the same time ; and to "Bennet Langton, Esq. at Langton, near "Spilsby, in Lincolnshire," it seems to have been Goldsmith's

"manner represented in the portrait by Sir Joshua. Occasionally he read much at "night when in bed ; at other times when not disposed to read, and yet unable "to sleep, which was not an unusual occurrence, the candle was kept burning, his "mode of extinguishing which when out of immediate reach was characteristic of "his fits of indolence or carelessness ; he flung his slipper at it, which in the morning "was in consequence usually found near the overturned candlestick, daubed with "grease. . . . Among others who frequently spent an evening with him was Hugh "Boyd, one of the supposed writers of the *Letters of Junius*, who resided for some "time at the neighbouring village of Kenton above two miles distant. The road "thither being excessively bad, Goldsmith, having once paid him a visit on foot, "returned at night without his shoes, which had stuck fast in a slough ; and, "anathematising the parish authorities for their negligence, declared he could not "again undertake such a journey."

\* The reader will remember what Mrs. Thrale says of Johnson, and of his alarming chemical explosions also. "It was a perpetual miracle that he did not set himself on "fire reading a-bed, as was his constant custom, when exceedingly unable even to keep "clear of mischief with our best help ; and accordingly the foretops of all his wigs "were burned by the candle down to the very net-work. . . Future experiments in "chemistry however were too dangerous, and Mr. Thrale insisted that we should do "no more towards finding the philosopher's stone." Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 237-8.

first business to write on his return to his chambers in the Temple. The pleasant letter has happily been preserved,\* and is dated from Brick-court, on the seventh of September.

1771.

"MY DEAR SIR, Since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been Æt. 43. almost wholly in the country at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished, but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honour of waiting upon Lady Rothes, and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. We often meet, and never without remembering you. I see Mr. Beauchamp very often both in town and country. He is now going directly forward to become a second Boyle: deep in chymistry and physics. Johnson has been down upon a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor; and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrale's. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant* a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The Natural History is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. They begin to talk in town of the Opposition's gaining ground; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, an *Abridgement of the History of England*,† for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody. However, they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it, you'll say that I am a sour Whig. God bless you, and with my most respectful compliments to her ladyship, I remain, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Though the Langton visit had been thus deferred, however, another new married couple claimed him soon after this letter; and he could not, amidst all his scurvy circumstances, resist the temptation. Little Comedy had become Mrs. Bunbury, and he was asked to visit them at Barton. But his means were insufficient; and, for a time to anticipate them, he laid himself under fresh obligations to Francis Newbery. Former money transactions between them, involving unfulfilled engagements for a new story,

\* In the *Percy Memoir*, 92-94.

† He means the *History* as published in four volumes, which, however, he had also undertaken to "abridge" on payment of fifty guineas. See *Percy Memoir*, 79.

remained yet uncanceled; and Garrick still held an outstanding note of Newbery's, unpaid because of disputed claims on behalf of the elder Newbery's estate: but a better understanding between <sup>1771.</sup> the publisher and his creditor, on the faith of certain completed chapters of the long-promised tale, had now arisen, and <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> Garrick was in no humour to disturb it by reviving any claim of his. Recent civilities and kindnesses had been heartily interchanged between the poet and the actor, and showed how little on either side was at any time needed to have made these celebrated men fast friends. In the last three years they had met more frequently than at any previous time, at Mr. Beaucherc's, Lord Clare's, and Sir Joshua's; and where there is anything to suggest mutual esteem, the more men know of each other the more they will wish to know. Thus had courtesies and goodnature freely passed between them; and hints of promise and acceptance for a new comedy would appear to have been interchanged, for we find Hoadly warning Garrick soon after against "giving in" to Dr. Goldsmith's *ridiculousity*.\* What was lately written in the country (little better than a rough draft at present, it is probable) is for Covent-garden; but he thinks he has so far succeeded as to feel yet greater confidence in the same direction, and something of an understanding for a future dramatic venture at Drury-lane seems certainly to have been agreed to. A new and strong link between them was supplied by the family whom Goldsmith is about to visit; for Garrick was Bunbury's most familiar friend, and a leader in all the sports at Barton.

What Goldsmith's ways and habits used to be there, a survivor of that happy circle lived to be still talking about not many years ago. "Come now let us play the fool a little," was his ordinary invitation to mirth; and he took part in every social game. Tricks were played upon his dress, upon his smart black silk coat and expensive pair of ruffles, above all upon his wig, which the valets as well as the guests at Barton seem to have thought a quizzical property; yet all this he suffered with imperturbable good-humour.

\* *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 583.



He sang comic songs with great taste and fun ; he was inventive in garden buildings and operations, over which he blundered amazingly ;\* and if there was a piece of water in any part of the grounds, he commonly managed to tumble into it.† Such were <sup>1771.</sup> the recollections of those days ; with the not unimportant addi- <sup>Æt. 43.</sup>

\* “Cradock, I am determined to come down into the country, and make some “stay with you, and I will build you an ice-house.” “Indeed my dear Doctor, you “will not ; you have got the strangest notion in the world of making amends to “your friends wherever you go ; I hope, if you favour me with a visit, you will consider that your own company is the best recompence.” “Well,” says Goldsmith, “that is civilly enough expressed, but I should like to build you an ice-house ; I “have built two already : they are perfect, and this should be a pattern to all your “county.” Cradock’s *Memoirs*, i. 231.

† These are the reminiscences of Mrs. Gwyn, the Jessamy Bride, as related twenty years ago. “Some difference of opinion,” she says, “having arisen with Lord Harrington respecting the depth of a pond, the poet remarked that it was not so “deep but that, if anything valuable was to be found at the bottom, he would not “hesitate to pick it up. His lordship, after some banter, threw in a guinea ; Goldsmith, not to be outdone in this kind of bravado, in attempting to fulfil his promise “without getting wet, accidentally fell in, to the amusement of all present, but “persevered, brought out the money, and kept it, remarking that he had abundant “objects on whom to bestow any further proofs of his lordship’s whim or bounty.” She said also that at cards, which was commonly a round game, and the stake small, he was always the most noisy ; affected great eagerness to win ; and teased his opponents of the gentler sex with continual jest and banter on their want of spirit in not risking the hazards of the game. But one of his most favourite enjoyments was to romp with children, when he threw off all reserve, and seemed one of the most joyous of the group. His simplicity of manners, she continued, made him occasionally the object of tricks of the jocular kind to other visitors of the house. Being at all times gay in dress, he generally made his appearance at the breakfast table in a smart black silk coat with an expensive pair of ruffles ; this coat, however, some one contrived to soil, and it was sent to be cleansed ; but, either by accident, or more probably design, the day after it came home the sleeves appeared daubed with paint, and this was hardly discovered when the ruffles also, to his great mortification, were produced irretrievably disfigured. “He always wore a wig, a peculiarity “which those who judge of his appearance only from the fine poetical head of “Reynolds would not suspect ; and on one occasion some person contrived seriously “to injure this important adjunct to dress. It was the only one he had in the “country, and the misfortune seemed irreparable until the services of Mr. Bunbury’s “valet were called in, who, however, performed his functions so indifferently, that “poor Goldsmith’s appearance became the signal for a general smile. . . . His “benevolence was unquestionable, and his countenance bore every trace of it. He “was a very plain man, but had he been much more so, it was impossible not to love “and respect his goodness of heart, which broke out upon every occasion. Nobody “that knew him intimately could avoid admiring and loving his good qualities. “They accused him of envy, but it certainly was not envy in the usual sense of that “word. . . . One of the means by which he amused us was his songs, chiefly of the “comic kind, which were sung with some taste and humour ; several, I believe, were



tion, that everybody in that circle respected, admired, and loved him. His fondness for flowers was a passion, which he was left to indulge without restraint; here, at Lord Clare's, at Bennet Langton's, <sup>1771.</sup> and at Beauclerc's. Thus, when Beau tells Lord Charlemont <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> a couple of years hence, that if he won't come to London, the club shall be sent to Ireland to drive him out of that country in self-defence, the terrors of his threat are, that Johnson shall spoil his books, Goldsmith pull his flowers, and (for a quite intolerable climax) Boswell *talk to him!*\* But most at the card-table does Goldsmith seem to have spread contagious mirth: affecting nothing of the rigour of the game (whether it was loo or any other), playing in wild defiance of the chances, laughing at all advice, staking preposterously, and losing always as much as the moderate pool could absorb. With fascinating pleasantry he has himself described all this, in answer to one of Mrs. Bunbury's invitations to Barton, wherein she had playfully counselled him to come to their Christmas party in his smart spring-velvet coat, to bring a wig that he might dance with the haymakers in, and above all to follow her and her sister's advice in playing loo. His reply, perhaps the most amusing and characteristic of all his letters, was published not many years ago by Sir Henry Bunbury. Between the mock gravity of its beginning and the farcical broad mirth of its close, flash forth the finest humour, the nicest compliments, and the most sprightly touches of character.

"MADAM, I read your letter with all that allowance which critical candour could require, but after all find so much to object to, and so much to raise my indignation, that I cannot help giving it a serious answer.

"I am not so ignorant, Madam, as not to see there are many sarcasms contained in it, and solecisms also. (Solecism is a word that comes from the town of Soleis in Attica,

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"of his own composition, and I regret that I neither have copies, which might have been readily procured from him at the time, nor do I remember their names. . . .

"I am sure," adds the Jessamy Bride, reiterating her former impression as to certain imputations against him (see *ante*, 217), "that on many occasions, from the peculiar manner of his humour, and assumed frown of countenance, what was often uttered in jest was mistaken by those who did not know him for earnest." See *Prior*, ii. 379.

\* *Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont*, 178.

among the Greeks, built by Solon, and applied as we use the word Kidderminster for curtains from a town also of that name,—but this is learning you have no taste for!) —I say, Madam, there are many sarcasms in it, and solecisms also. But not to seem an ill-natured critic, I'll take leave to quote your own words, and <sup>1771.</sup> give you my remarks upon them as they occur. You begin as follows: Æt. 43.

‘I hope my good Doctor, you soon will be here,  
And your spring-velvet coat very smart will appear,  
To open our ball the first day of the year.’

“Pray, Madam, where did you ever find the epithet ‘good,’ applied to the title of Doctor? Had you called me ‘learned Doctor,’ or ‘grave Doctor,’ or ‘noble Doctor,’ it might be allowable, because they belong to the profession. But, not to cavil at trifles, you talk of my ‘spring-velvet coat,’ and advise me to wear it the first day in the year, that is, in the middle of winter!—a spring-velvet coat in the middle of winter!!! That would be a solecism indeed! and yet to increase the inconsistency, in another part of your letter you call me a beau. Now, on one side or other, you must be wrong. If I am a beau, I can never think of wearing a spring-velvet in winter: and if I am not a beau, why then, that explains itself. But let me go on to your two next strange lines:

‘And bring with you a wig, that is modish and gay,  
To dance with the girls that are makers of hay.’

“The absurdity of making hay at Christmas you yourself seem sensible of: you say your sister will laugh; and so indeed she well may! The Latins have an expression for a contemptuous kind of laughter, ‘naso contemnere adunco;’ that is, to laugh with a crooked nose. She may laugh at you in the manner of the antients if she thinks fit. But now I come to the most extraordinary of all extraordinary propositions, which is, to take your and your sister’s advice in playing at loo. The presumption of the offer raises my indignation beyond the bounds of prose; it inspires me at once with verse and resentment. I take advice! and from whom? You shall hear.

“First let me suppose, what may shortly be true,  
The company set, and the word to be, Loo:  
All smirking, and pleasant, and big with adventure,  
And ogling the stake which is fix’d in the centre.  
Round and round go the cards, while I inwardly damn  
At never once finding a visit from Pam.  
I lay down my stake, apparently cool,  
While the harpies about me all pocket the pool.  
I fret in my gizzard, yet, cautious and sly,  
I wish all my friends may be bolder than I:  
Yet still they sit snug, not a creature will aim  
By losing their money to venture at fame.  
’Tis in vain that at niggardly caution I scold,  
’Tis in vain that I flatter the brave and the bold:  
All play their own way, and they think me an ass,—  
‘What does Mrs. Bunbury?’—‘I, Sir? I pass.  
‘Pray what does Miss Horneck? take courage, come do,’—  
‘Who, I? let me see, Sir, why I must pass too.’

1771.

Æt. 43.

Mr. Bunbury frets, and I fret like the devil,  
 To see them so cowardly, lucky, and civil.  
 Yet still I sit snug, and continue to sigh on,  
 'Till, made by my losses as bold as a lion,  
 I venture at all,—while my avarice regards  
 The whole pool as my own—' Come give me five cards.  
 'Well done!' cry the ladies; 'Ah, Doctor, that's good!  
 'The pool's very rich,—ah! the Doctor is loo'd!  
 Thus foil'd in my courage, on all sides perplex'd,  
 I ask for advice from the lady that's next:  
 'Pray, Ma'am, be so good as to give your advice;  
 'Don't you think the best way is to venture for 't twice?'  
 'I advise,' cries the lady, 'to try it, I own.—  
 'Ah! the Doctor is loo'd! Come, Doctor, put down.'  
 Thus, playing, and playing, I still grow more eager,  
 And so bold, and so bold, I'm at last a bold beggar.  
 Now, ladies, I ask, if law-matters you're skilled in,  
 Whether crimes such as yours should not come before Fielding:  
 For giving advice that is not worth a straw,  
 May well be call'd picking of pockets in law;  
 And picking of pockets, with which I now charge ye,  
 Is, by quinto Elizabeth, Death without Clergy.  
 What justice, when both to the Old Bailey brought!  
 By the gods, I'll enjoy it, tho' 'tis but in thought!  
 Both are plac'd at the bar, with all proper decorum,  
 With bunches of fennell, and nosegays before 'em;  
 Both cover their faces with mobs and all that,  
 But the judge bids them, angrily, take off their hat.  
 When uncover'd, a buz of inquiry runs round,—  
 'Pray what are their crimes?'—'They've been pilfering found.'  
 'But, pray, who have they pilfer'd?'—'A Doctor, I hear.'  
 'What, yon solemn-faced, odd-looking man that stands near!'  
 'The same.'—'What a pity! how does it surprise one,  
 'Two handsomer culprits I never set eyes on!'  
 Then their friends all come round me with cringing and leering,  
 To melt me to pity, and soften my swearing.  
 First Sir Charles advances with phrases well-strung,  
 'Consider, dear Doctor, the girls are but young.'  
 'The younger the worse,' I return him again,  
 'It shews that their habits are all dyed in grain.'  
 'But then they're so handsome, one's bosom it grieves.'  
 'What signifies *handsome*, when people are thieves?'  
 'But where is your justice? their cases are hard.'  
 'What signifies *justice*? I want the *reward*.'

"There's the parish of Edmonton offers forty pounds; there's the parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch offers forty pounds; there's the parish of Tyburn, from the Hog-in-the-pound to St. Giles's watch-house, offers forty pounds,—I shall have all that if I convict them!"—

"But consider their case,—it may yet be your own!  
 'And see how they kneel! Is your heart made of stone?'"

This moves:—so at last I agree to relent,  
For ten pounds in hand, and ten pounds to be spent.

“I challenge you all to answer this: I tell you, you cannot. It cuts deep;  
—but now for the rest of the letter: and next—but I want room—so I 1771.  
believe I shall battle the rest out at Barton some day next week.

Æt. 43.

“I don’t value you all!

“O. G.”\*

\* Sir Henry Bunbury’s *Correspondence of Sir T. Hanmer*, 379-83. We shall have a vivid impression of these sports at Barton, in which Goldsmith and Garrick were the leaders, by keeping in mind the contrast between the two: the fulness of resource in the one and its complete absence in the other; Goldsmith’s blundering unreadiness the always ludicrous set-off to Garrick’s exquisite self-possession; and, apart from the genius that rendered both so attractive, not a point of resemblance except that both were under middle size. Nay, even this likeness was but difference in another form. We all know the personal disadvantage it was to the poet, but no one could recognise it for a defect in the actor; and the reader of my book, familiar with its many descriptions of Goldsmith’s person, will find easy explanation of this in what I now subjoin of Garrick’s. A German in England in 1775 saw him in all his leading parts, and what I shall quote is from the traveller’s published letters, written at the time to a German friend, in which there are descriptions of him more entirely satisfactory than any others that exist. “There is in his physiognomy,” says the keen-eyed Lichtenberg, “his figure, and his gait a peculiar distinction and charm “which I have just now and then noticed in a few Frenchmen, but have never observed “in any other Englishman. . . For instance, when he turns to salute any one, it is not “only his head and shoulders, or arms and legs, that come into play, but all these, all “together, and every other part of the man, that simultaneously and harmoniously contribute, each its special grace, to the most refined expression of a supreme courtesy, “such as could not have been surpassed by the greatest grand seigneur of the Court of “Louis XIV. There is no man in England who can make Garrick’s bow. When he “enters upon the stage, simply as Garrick, in any part which does not demand from “his countenance some set expression of cruelty, fear, hope, &c, there is in his regard a “gracious somewhat that is irresistibly attractive. His stature is below the middle “height; his frame is small, but marvellously compact; and the whole man is “harmoniously held together. His limbs are exquisitely proportioned, and the “keenest eye cannot detect a single defect, either in their structure or their movements. In these latter you always recognise that rich reserve of physical strength “which pleases more by repression than display. Nothing in him is slipshod, “slovenly, or slouching. No actor ever needed less elbow-room for effective gesture. “And, where all other players overshoot the line of beauty by an inch or two, in “giving free play to their arms and legs, Garrick hits it off to a hair, never missing, “and never exceeding it. Among other actors he moves like a man among *marionnettes*. His way of walking across the stage, of shrugging his shoulders, of crossing his arms, of cocking his hat, or putting it on and taking it off—in short, “whatever he does—is so easily and *securely* done, that the man appears to be *all* “right hand.” From a paper by Mr. Lytton in the *Fortnightly Review* for February, 1871. Mr. Tom Taylor had already translated some passages from Lichtenberg, which are quoted in Mr. Fitzgerald’s *Garrick*, ii. 67, 93, and 101.



## CHAPTER XIII.

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### FAME ACQUIRED AND TASKWORK RESUMED.

1772.

To battle it out on any kind of challenge at Barton was to Goldsmith always a pleasure ; but it was a hard and difficult game to battle it out in London, and the stakes were growing somewhat desperate. <sup>1772.</sup> Francis Newbery seems in some shape <sub>Æt. 41.</sub> to have revived the question of their old accounts, on his return from the last visit at Mr. Bunbury's ; and he appears in that publisher's books as having *paid* twenty pounds, a new and arduous character. But he wears a cheerful face still ; has his grave kind word for the poor struggling adventurer, his gay sprightly prologue for the ambitious amateur author, and still, as of old, indiscriminate help for any one who presents himself with a plausible petition, all the surer of acceptance if graced with a brogue. A poor Irish youth afterwards known as a physician, Dr. M'Veagh M'Donnell, told in after life how he had flung himself in despair on a seat in the Temple-gardens, eyeing the water wistfully, when a kind genial-faced countryman, whom he was soon to know as the famous Goldsmith, came up to him, talked him into good spirits, brought him into his chambers, told him that in London nothing could be got for nothing but much might be got for work, and set him afloat in the world by giving him chapters of Buffon to translate. This poor client used to grieve when, in the course of this daily labour, he saw his patron subject to frequent fits of depression ; when he saw "printers and

“booksellers” hunting him down; and tells us that he cried bitterly, and a blank came over his heart, when he afterwards heard of his death.\* Unluckily the patron was not always so fortunate in the objects of his bounty.

1772.  
Æt. 44.

The anecdote now to be related was told soon after Goldsmith's death by one of his friends, who, while remarking that a great point of pride with him was to be liberal to his poor countrymen who applied to him in distress, interposes that the expression “pride” was not an improper one to use, because he did it with some degree of ostentation. The instance is then given of a singularly artful youth who had preyed upon his celebrated countryman for some time in this way, representing his unappreciated abilities, which it never occurred to Goldsmith to doubt, and his sore necessities, which he was always willing to relieve. At last, however, this had been repeated so often, that it occurred to Goldsmith to give his young friend the chance (he so ardently

\* Dr. Mc'Donnell says: “I was then about eighteen; I possessed neither friends nor money, nor the means of getting to Ireland, of which or of England I knew scarcely anything, from having so long resided in France. In this situation I had strolled about for two or three days, considering what to do, but unable to come to any determination, when Providence directed me to the Temple Gardens. I threw myself on a seat, and, willing to forget my miseries for a moment, drew out a book; that book was a volume of Boileau. I had not been there long when a gentleman strolling about passed near me, and observing perhaps something Irish or foreign in my garb or countenance, addressed me: ‘Sir, you seem studious; I hope you find this a favourable place to pursue it.’ . . . A good deal of conversation ensued; I told him part of my history, and he, in return, gave his address in the Temple, desiring me to call soon, from which to my infinite surprise and gratification I found that the person who thus seemed to take an interest in my fate was my countryman, and a distinguished ornament of letters. I did not fail to keep the appointment, and was received in the kindest manner. He told me smilingly, that he was not rich; that he could do little for me in direct pecuniary aid, but would endeavour to put me in the way of doing something for myself; observing, that he could at least furnish me with advice not wholly useless to a young man placed in the heart of a great metropolis. ‘In London,’ he continued, ‘nothing is to be got for nothing: you must work; and no man who chooses to be industrious need be under obligations to another, for here labour of every kind commands its reward. If you think proper to assist me occasionally as amanuensis, I shall be obliged and you will be placed under no obligation, until something more permanent can be secured for you.’ This employment, which I pursued for some time, was to translate passages from *Buffon*, which was abridged or altered according to circumstances for his *Natural History*.” See *Prior*, ii. 344-6.

professed to desire) of making some return for what he received, by the exercise of those literary talents for which he had hitherto failed to get any direct outlet of his own. At the particular time a bookseller had asked Goldsmith to draw up, for <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> some occasional purpose, "and at a price he despised but "had not rejected," a description of China; and on this description of China he set his pensioner to work. The original teller of the anecdote will relate, in simple but expressive language, the sequel and its catastrophe. "Such was the idle carelessness of his "temper that he never gave himself the trouble to read the manuscript, but sent to the press an account which made the Emperor "of China a Mahometan, and which supposed India to be between "China and Japan. Two sheets were cancelled at Goldsmith's "expense, who kicked his newly created author down stairs."\*

Another similar case had a graver issue. An Irish youth named Griffin, one of the many Roman Catholic lads of that day driven over to France for the education then denied them in their own land, and thus exposed to temptations at too early an age for effective resistance, had come back to London with the wants and resources of a desperate adventurer. He assailed at once both Garrick and Goldsmith, shrewdly sending the actor a poetical address of the most extravagant praise, while he wrote letters to the poet pointing out the most affecting distress, and implored his intercession with Garrick to obtain him relief. "The writer of "this," says the author of the first memoir,† "who hath perused "both the verses and the letters, saw no attempt to flatter Goldsmith, or to interest him otherwise than through his compassion." No stronger motive could at any time be given. In this case it not only procured the applicant what he sought, but such recommendation also as obtained him the place of teacher in a school, where unhappily he had not remained long before he robbed the house and made his escape.

\* *European Magazine*, v. 15. (Cooke's anecdotes, of which this is not one, did not appear till several years later.)

† *Percy Memoir*, 100.

Yet the clients were not always of this class. A livelier petitioner, whose claim was for the less substantial and more poetical help of a prologue, and who is now duly to be presented, was a young man of fortune named Cradock, living in Leicestershire, who, <sup>1772.</sup> bringing up with him his wife and a translation of one of <sup>Æt. 44.</sup> Voltaire's tragedies and introductions to the celebrated people, had come lately to London, very eager about plays and players: being a clever amateur actor as well as writer, liking to be called little Cradock, and really fancying himself, one would say, quite a private little Garrick. Goldsmith met him at the actor Yates's house; their common knowledge of Lord Clare soon put them on familiar terms; and a prologue for *Zobeide* was readily promised. "Mr. Goldsmith," says the note with which he soon after forwarded it (Cradock was staying at Gosfield at the time), "presents his best respects to Mr. Cradock; has sent him the Prologue such as it is. He cannot take time to make it better. He begs he will give Mr. Yates the proper instructions; and so, even so, he commits him to fortune and the publick."\* He had himself dropped the title of *Doctor* at this time, says one of his friends, but the world would not let him lose it. The prologue, very wittily built on the voyage to Otaheite which was making Lieutenant Cook somewhat famous just now, was spoken, not by Yates, but by Quick, in the character of a sailor.†

The influence of Lord Clare is also to be detected in his next poetical product. This was a *Lament* for the death of the Princess-dowager of Wales, Robert Nugent's old political mistress and patron, who died in February 1772; before the close of which month Goldsmith's poem, with a title copied from Dryden, the *Threnodia Augustalis*, announced in the papers to be "written for the purpose, by a gentleman of acknowledged literary merit," was

\* Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 224. "I must say," he writes, emphasizing the statement with amusingly big capital letters, "Garrick spoke with great satisfaction of my acting."

† "There is a new tragedy at Covent-garden called *Zobeide*, which I am told is very indifferent, though written by a Country Gentleman." *Letters of Walpole to Lady Ossory*, i. 29.



recited and sung with appropriate music at Mrs. Cornely's fashionable rooms in Soho-square. Cradock, whose theatrical accomplishments

included a taste for music, seems to have helped him in the adaptation of the parts; and has published a note from "Mr." <sup>1772.</sup>  
Æt. 44.

Goldsmith in which, with best respects to Mr. Cradock, he says, "When he asked him to-day, he quite forgot an engagement "of above a week's standing, which has been made purposely for "him; he feels himself quite uneasy at not being permitted to "have his instructions upon those parts where he must necessarily be defective. He will have a rehearsal on Monday," he adds (the note is dated on Sunday morning), "when if Mr. Cradock "would come, and afterwards take a bit of mutton chop, it would "add to his other obligations."\* The thing was hardly worth even so much trouble, for it was purely an occasional piece. Though not without a passage of merit here and there, it was written, as we learn from the advertisement prefixed to it, in a couple of days; Goldsmith himself honestly calls it "a compilation," which it really was, rather than "a poem;" and it did not appear with his name attached to it until forty years after his death. Cradock then gave it to his friend Nichols, who handed it to Chalmers.† His connection with its authorship escaped even

\* *Memoirs*, i. 225.

† See Nichols's *Illustrations*, vii. 25. It contained whole lines and stanzas taken bodily out of Collins's *Odes*. And as I have occasion to notice this fact, let me add that Goldsmith is now and then found borrowing in other places without very specific acknowledgment. A few examples have already been given, but perhaps the most curious is a thought which he took *verbatim* from the last sentence in Sir William Temple's *Discourse of Poetry* (Works, folio edition, 1720, i. 249), and of which he was so fond, and so little careful to hide his acquisition in a corner, that he has repeated it thrice in his various writings. I remembered it as Temple's from having heard it in my youth read out by Charles Lamb, who was also very fond of it. "When all is done, Human Life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward Child, that must be play'd with and humour'd a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the Care is over." Goldsmith puts this into the mouth of Mr. Croaker, as his own (Act I. Scene i.); in the concluding chapter of his *Enquiry into Polite Learning*, he repeats it, with the saving clause that "Life, &c. has been compared to a froward child," &c; and, writing in the assumed character of "A Nobleman to his Son" in his *Letters on English History*, he thus compromises between his absolute appropriation in the first instance, and his more modified abstraction in the second: "And perhaps, my child, after all, what your noble ancestor has observed is most true:—When all is done, human life," &c.

Boswell, who, yet busier and more inquisitive than of old, came up from his Scotch practice for his annual London visit not a month after it was performed, more than ever amazed at the amount of Goldsmith's celebrity. "Sir," he said to Johnson somewhat later, "Goldsmith has acquired more fame than all the officers last war who were not generals!" "Why, sir," answered Johnson, "you will find ten thousand fit to do what they did, before you find one who does what Goldsmith has done. You must consider that a thing is valued according to its rarity. A pebble that paves the street is in itself more useful than the diamond upon a lady's finger."\* But this did not satisfy Boswell, who had now in truth a strong, secret, and to himself perhaps only half-confessed reason for his very ludicrous jealousy and impatience. He fancied Goldsmith likely to be Johnson's biographer, and that was an office he already coveted and had selected for himself.

For now began that series of questions,† *What did you do, sir? What did you say, sir?* which afterwards forced from their victim the energetic protest: "Sir, I will not be put to the *question*. Don't you consider, sir, that these are not the manners of a gentleman? I will not be baited with *what* and *why*; what is this? what is that? why is a cow's tail long? why is a fox's tail bushy?"‡ In

\* *Bos.* iv. 145. "I wish," adds Boswell, "our friend Goldsmith had heard this."

† For one of a thousand examples of the ridiculous minuteness of Boswell's boredom, see Johnson put to the torture on the subject of squeezed oranges, v. 269.

‡ *Life*, vii. 105-6. Boswell amusingly continues of himself: "The gentleman, who was a good deal out of countenance, said, 'Why, sir, you are so good, that I venture to trouble you.' JOHNSON: 'Sir, my being so good is no reason why you should be so ill.'" On another occasion there was what poor Boswell calls a "horrible shock." They were talking about the necessity of getting Langton out of the extravagance of his London house, and Boswell ventured to suggest that he might be driven away by his friends quarrelling with him: "Nay, sir," put in Johnson, "we'll send you to him. If your company does not drive a man out of his house, nothing will." A third instance occurred on Boswell's complaining of a headache from the wine they had taken at a late sitting in the Mitre: "Nay, sir, it was not the wine that made your head ache, but the sense that I put into it." BOSWELL: "What, sir! will sense make the head ache?" JOHNSON: "Yes, sir" (with a smile), "when it is not used to it." (vii. 255.) Very whimsical too, and very creditable to Boswell moreover, is a remark afterwards interchanged between him and Johnson. BOSWELL: "I said to-day to Sir Joshua, when he observed that you

all which, notwithstanding, Bozzy persisted: forgetting so much more of the manners of a gentleman as even to lay down his knife and fork, take out his tablets, and report speeches in the middle of a dinner-table; submitting to daily rebuffs, reproofs, and indignities; satisfied to be played over and drenched by the fountain of (what he never dreams of describing

1772.  
Æt. 44.



by a ruder name than) "wit;" content not only to be called, by the object of his veneration, a dunce, a parasite, a coxcomb, an eavesdropper, and a fool, but even faithfully to report what he calls the "keen sarcastic wit," the "variety of degrading images," the "rudeness," and the "ferocity," of which he was made the special object: \* bent all the more firmly upon the one design which seized

"tossed me sometimes, 'I don't care how often or how high he tosses me, when only "friends are present, for then I fall upon soft ground; but I do not like falling "on stones, which is the case when enemies are present.' I think this a pretty good "image, sir." JOHNSON (mollified and repentant): "Sir, it is one of the happiest I "have ever heard." (vii. 196.) So, on the occasion of the horrible shock above recorded, and for which there had been no visible cause, "I afterwards," says Boswell, "asked him why he had said so harsh a thing. JOHNSON: 'Because, sir, "you made me angry about the Americans.' BOSWELL: 'But why did you not "take your revenge directly?' JOHNSON (smiling): 'Because, sir, I had nothing "ready. A man cannot strike till he has his weapons.' This was a candid and "pleasant confession." vii. 160.

\* *Life*, iv. 229-30.



and occupied the whole of such faculties as he possessed, and living in such manner to achieve it as to have made himself immortal as his hero. "You have but two topics, sir," exclaimed Johnson; "yourself and me. I am sick of both." Happily <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> for us, nothing could sicken Boswell of either; and by one of the most moderately wise men that ever lived, the masterpiece of English biography was written.

It is so, because, after every allowance made for the writer's failings, it is a book thoroughly honest and true to the minutest letter. "I besought his tenderness," says Mrs. Hannah More, a few months after his hero's death,\* "for our virtuous and most "revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of "his asperities. He said roughly, He would not cut off his claws, "nor make a tiger a cat, to please anybody." Perhaps there is nothing sadder to think of in our history than the many tigers that figure as cats, and the many cats who trample about as tigers. What would we now give to have had a Boswell for every Johnson! to have had in attendance on all our immortals as much self-complacent folly with as much shrewd clear insight; the same lively power to do justice to their sayings, the same reverence to devote such talents to that humble service, and the same conceit full-proof against every degradation it involved. We have but to turn to the biography of any other man of letters to comprehend our debt of gratitude to Boswell; we have but to remember how fruitless is the quest, when we would seek to stand face to face with any other as famous Englishmen. "So, sir," said Johnson to Cibber, "I find you knew Mr. Dryden?" "Knew him!" said Cibber. "O Lord! I was as well acquainted with him as if he "had been my own brother." "Then," rejoined the other, "you "can tell me some anecdotes of him?" "Oh yes," exclaimed Colley, "a thousand! why, we used to meet him continually at a "club at Button's. I remember as well as if it were but yesterday, that when he came into the room in winter-time, he used

\* In 1785. *Memoirs and Correspondence of Hannah More*, i. 403; and see *Ibid.* l. 211-2, and Madame D'Arblay's *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, ii. 190-7.



"to go and sit close by the fire in one corner; and that in summer-time, he would always go and sit in the window."\* Such was the information Johnson got from Cibber as to the <sup>1772.</sup> manners and habits of Dryden. Such, or little better, but <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> for Boswell, might have been our knowledge of Johnson.

Early in April he dined in company with Johnson and Goldsmith at General Oglethorpe's, and "fired up" the brave old General by making a question of the moral propriety of duelling.† "I ask you "first, sir," said Goldsmith, "what would you do if you were affronted?" "I answered," says Boswell, "I should think it ne-

\* Warner's *Letters*. (*Johnsoniana*, x. 120.) For Boswell's version of the story, which is not so good, see vi. 193. It was in connection with this subject Johnson maintained (iv. 261-2) that "he did not think that the life of any literary man in "England had been well written. Beside the common incidents of life, it should "tell us his studies, his mode of living, the means by which he attained to excellence, "and his opinion of his own works. He told us he had sent Derrick to Dryden's "relations, to gather materials for his life; and he believed Derrick had got all that "he himself should have got; but it was nothing." On another occasion, some one having remarked that it seemed hardly possible to render the life of a mere literary man very entertaining, "But," retorted Johnson with perfect truth, "it certainly "may. This is a remark which has been made, and repeated, without justice. Why "should the life of a literary man be less entertaining than the life of any other "man? Are there not as interesting varieties in such a life? As a *literary life* it "may be very entertaining." (viii. 76.) Johnson's love for biography is well known, and that he held it to be the best form of history, as giving us always what comes near to ourselves, and what we can turn to use. "What is nearest touches us most." I doubt however if another remark of his is so well known, which seems to me highly characteristic of him. "I love anecdotes. I fancy mankind may come, in "time, to write all aphoristically, except in narrative; grow weary of preparation, "and connection, and illustration, and all those arts by which a big book is made." *Dos*. iv. 31.

† The question about duelling appears to have arisen out of a capital anecdote which the General had been relating to his guests, and which Boswell has preserved for us. When only fifteen he was serving under Prince Eugene, and being at table with one of the princes of Wirtemberg, the prince took up a glass of wine, and by a flip made some of it fly in Oglethorpe's face. Here was a nice dilemma. To have challenged him instantly might have fixed a quarrelsome character on the young soldier, whereas to have taken no notice might have been construed into cowardice. "Oglethorpe, therefore," continues Boswell, "keeping his eye upon the "prince, and smiling all the time, as if he took what his Highness had done in jest, "said, 'Mon Prince'—(I forget the French words he used; the purport however "was) 'that's a good joke; but we do it much better in England;' and threw a "whole glass of wine in the prince's face. An old general who sat by, said, 'Il "a bien fait, mon prince, vous l'avez commencé;' and thus all ended in good "humour." iii. 218.

"cessary to fight." "Why then," was the reply, "that solves the question." "No, sir," interposed Johnson, "it does *not* solve the question:" which he thereupon proceeded himself to solve, by regretting the superfluity of refinement which existed in <sup>1772.</sup>  
society on the subject of affronts, and admitting that duelling <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> must be tolerated so long as such notions should prevail. After this (the General having meanwhile poured a little wine on the table, and, at Johnson's request, described with a wet finger the siege of Belgrade), a question was started of how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle*, the same likings and the same aversions. "Why, sir," returned Johnson, "you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For instance, I can live very well with Burke: I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party." "But, sir," retorted Goldsmith, "when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard: *You may look into all the chambers but one.* But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject." Johnson hereupon with a loud voice shouted out, "Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom *you* differ as to some point; I am only saying that *I* could do it. You put me in mind of Sappho in *Ovid*."\*

Goldsmith had said too clever a thing, and got punished for it.

\* iii. 218-9. This was probably the first and last time that Goldsmith and Sappho ever found themselves in each other's company! But when Boswell and Johnson next met, the uneasy recollection of their friend's clever hit in this argument had not passed away. "Of our friend Goldsmith he said, 'Sir, he is so much afraid of being unnoticed, that he often talks merely lest you should forget that he is in the company.' BOSWELL: 'Yes, he stands forward.' JOHNSON: 'True, sir, but if a man is to stand forward, he should wish to do it, not in an awkward posture, not in rags, not so as that he shall only be exposed to ridicule.' BOSWELL: 'For my part, I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith talk away carelessly.' JOHNSON: 'Why, yes, sir; but he should not like to hear himself.'" Boswell, iii. 222

So it was with Percy, very often; \* so with Joseph Warton; so with Dean Barnard; † so with Langton; so even with Beauclerc and Reynolds. What Miss Anna Seward called "the wit  
 1772.  
 .Æt. 44. "and aweless impoliteness of the stupendous creature" bore down every one before it. His forcible spirit and impetuosity of manner, says Boswell, "may be said to spare neither sex nor age. I have seen even Mrs. Thrale stunned." ‡ Yet, if we may believe Miss Reynolds, she never said more, when she recovered, than *Oh dear good man!* § And Dean Barnard, invoking the aid of his friends against the aweless impoliteness, and submitting himself to be taught by their better accomplishments, has told us in lively verse with what good-humour it was borne by Reynolds.

I lately thought no man alive  
 Could e'er improve past forty-five,  
 And ventured to assert it;

\* I have before remarked his odd impatience when Percy is praised, and I may here give an instance of a year's later date than the present, since Goldsmith's name is introduced in it. Boswell and he are talking in the Hebrides. "Doctor Birch being mentioned, he said he had more anecdotes than any man. I said, Percy had 'a great many; that he flowed with them like one of the brooks here. JOHNSON: "If Percy was like one of the brooks here, Birch was like the river Thames. Birch "excelled Percy in that, as much as Percy excels Goldsmith.'" iv. 281.

† It may be well perhaps to warn the reader that the Dr. Barnard, Dean of Derry and ultimately Bishop of Killaloe, so often referred to in these pages, is not the Dr. Barnard, Provost of Eton, and also a friend of Johnson's, with whom he is frequently confounded by writers imperfectly acquainted with the time. It was of the Provost he made the characteristic remark preserved by Mrs. Piozzi that "he was the only man too (says Mr. Johnson, quite seriously) that did justice to my good breeding, "and you may observe that I am well-bred to a degree of needless scrupulosity" (*Anecdotes*, 36); a remark which he could hardly have made of the Dean, to whom, on the latter doubting if a man could improve after forty-five, he recommended the advisability of making the trial, for, he added, also seriously, "though you are forty-eight, I am afraid there is great room for it." *Boswell*, viii. 93; and *Croker*, 833. But the best account of the incident is in a letter of Richard's to William Burke (Jan. 6, 1773); to whom he forwards a complete copy of the verses, "sent early next morning to Reynolds," suggested by Johnson's sally, and quoted in my text. See *Burke Correspondence*, i. 403-7.

‡ v. 13-4.

§ "One day, at her own table, he spoke so very roughly to her, that every one present was surprised that she could bear it so placidly; and on the ladies withdrawing, I expressed great astonishment that Dr. Johnson should speak so harshly to her, but to this she said no more than 'Oh dear good man!'" *Bos.* vi. 169. Mr. Croker has not repeated this anecdote in his last edition.

The observation was not new,  
But seem'd to me so just and true,  
That none could controvert it.

1772.

Æt. 44.

"No, sir," says Johnson, "'tis not so;  
That's your mistake, and I can show  
An instance, if you doubt it;—  
You, sir, who are near forty-eight,  
May much improve, 'tis not too late;  
I wish you'd set about it."

\* \* \*

Then come, my friends, and try your skill;  
You can improve me if you will;  
(My books are at a distance:)  
With you I'll live and learn; and then,  
Instead of books, I shall read men;  
So lend me your assistance.

Dear knight of Plympton, teach me how  
To suffer with unclouded brow  
And smile serene as thine,  
The jest uncouth and truth severe;  
Like thee to turn my deafest ear,  
And calmly drink my wine.

\* \* \*

If I have thoughts and can't express 'em,  
Gibbon shall teach me how to dress 'em  
In terms select and terse;  
Jones teach me modesty and Greek,  
Smith how to think, Burke how to speak  
And Beauclerc to converse.

Let Johnson teach me how to place  
In fairest light each borrowed grace,  
From him I'll learn to write;  
Copy his clear and easy style,  
And from the roughness of his file,  
Grow as himself,—polite!

Soon after the dinner at Oglethorpe's,\* Goldsmith returned to

\* Which yet perhaps I ought not to quit without mentioning the characteristic fact, that, the subject of ghosts happening to arise among other topics started at the table, and Johnson mentioning the ghost which he believed old Cave the bookseller to have seen—(very famous for the great and satisfactory particularity of description elicited by Boswell's anxiety to know all about it. "And pray, sir, what did he say 'was the appearance?' " "Why, sir, something of a shadowy being.")—"Goldsmith told us, he was assured by his brother, the Rev. Mr. Goldsmith, that he also had 'seen one.' (iii. 220.) Boswell's belief in ghosts receives amusing illustration in one of Johnson's letters from the Hebrides. "The chapel is thirty-eight feet long, and 'eighteen broad. Boswell, who is very pious, went into it at night to perform his 'devotions, but came back in haste for fear of spectres." *Piozzi Letters*, i. 173.



his Edgeware lodging, and was some time busied with the *Animated Nature*. It was a task he worked at best in the country, with Nature wide-spread around him : for though a severe criticism may point it out as the defect of the book, that, taken as a whole, it has too many of the characteristics of a mere compilation, into which he appears disposed, as we have seen, to admit as freely the credulous romance of the early naturalists and travellers, as the scientific soberness of the great Frenchman his contemporary whose labours were still unfinished while he wrote,—there are yet, as I have lately said, with many evidences of very careful study of the best of the scanty authorities then extant, also many original passages of exquisite *country* observation in it ; and not a few in which the grace of diction, the choice of perfect and finely-finished imagery, the charm with which a poet's fancy is seen playing round the graver truths of science, and an elegant clearness and beauty in the tone of reflection, may compare with his best original compositions, in poetry or prose. He did not live to see its reception from his contemporaries ; but when Tom Davies, who was in the way of hearing all kinds of opinions about it from the best authorities, characterises it as one of the pleasantest and most instructive books in the language, not only useful to young minds, but entertaining to those who understand the subject, which the writer certainly did not, there is little doubt that he reflects pretty nearly what Johnson thought and said. He appears to be repeating Johnson, too, when he adds that “ everything of Goldsmith seems to bear the magical touch of an enchanter : no man took less pains, and yet produced so powerful an effect : the great beauty of his composition consists in a clear, copious, and expressive style.” All this is true to a certain extent ; but it is also not less certain that it is not by “ not taking pains ” such a style can be ever mastered. The pains has been taken at some time or other, the reader may be sure, and the skill to conceal it is the secret of that exquisite ease. The contrast between his MS. elaborations in prose and in poetry has been remarked in a previous page,\* but

\* *Ante*, 168-9.

though of course there would always be a distinction in this respect in every writer, we must not suppose that the amount of correction or interlineation can always be taken to express the presence or absence of care and labour. The safer <sup>1772.</sup>  
inference will be that in proportion as a subject has dwelt <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> in the mind, and been thoroughly arranged and well digested there, it will flow forth clearly at last.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.

He tells us in the preface to the *Animated Nature*, most characteristically, that his first intention was to have given a sort of popular translation and comment on Pliny, but that the appearance of M. Buffon's great work induced him to depart from that design ; "being convinced by his manner, that the best imitation of the "ancients was to write from our own feelings, and to imitate "nature." And for proof that he honestly did this, it might be enough to refer to the many personal characteristics and experiences I have been able to draw from the book, having lately, with singular and unexpected pleasure, read the whole of it with that view. There are bits of natural painting in every part of it as true as anything in the *Traveller* or *Deserted Village*. You perceive at once that he is as sincerely describing what he has actually seen and felt, as when, in either of those charming poems, he lets you hear the sweet confusion of "village murmurs" in the country air, or shows you the beauty that a poet and lover of nature may see in even the flat low coasts of Holland, "the yellow-blossom'd "vale, the willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail." Many such passages have incidentally enriched these pages ; and in others,—such as the opening chapter on birds of the sparrow kind (iv. 235-7), or that walk by the sea-shore (iv. 375) in which his thoughts turn so unaffectedly to Him who is "the essence of sublimity," or where the change of the grub to the butterfly is accepted for "a "strong proof that, while this little animal is raised to its greatest "height, we are as yet, in this world, only candidates for perfection" (iv. 66),—may be observed another delightful feature of it, in its

unobtrusive manner of blending religious aspiration with natural description.

Nor is there any section of the book more entirely pleasing, <sup>1772.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 44.</sup> in this personal view, than the whole treatment of the ornithological division of its subject. With manifest delight the theme inspires its writer as he begins to talk of the "beautiful and "loquacious race of animals that embellish our forests, amuse our "walks, and exclude solitude from our most shady retirements. "From these man has nothing to fear; their pleasures, their desires, "and even their animosities, may serve to enliven the general picture "of nature, and give harmony to meditation. . . . No part of nature "appears destitute of inhabitants. The woods, the waters, the "depths of the earth, have their respective tenants; while the "yielding air, and those tracts of seeming space where man never "can ascend, are also passed through by multitudes of the most "beautiful beings of the creation. . . . The return of spring is "the beginning of pleasure. Those vital spirits which seemed "locked up during the winter, then begin to expand; vegetables "and insects supply abundance of food; and the bird having more "than a sufficiency for its own subsistence, is impelled to trans- "fuse life as well as to maintain it. Those warblings, which had "been hushed during the colder seasons, now begin to animate "the fields; every grove and bush resounds with the challenge of "anger, or the call of allurements. This delightful concert of the "grove, which is so much admired by man, is no way studied for "his amusement: it is usually the call of the male to the female; "his efforts to soothe her during the times of incubation: or it "is a challenge between two males, for the affections of some com- "mon favourite. . . . We must not take our idea of the conjugal "fidelity of birds from observing the poultry in our yards, whose "freedom is abridged, and whose manners are totally corrupted "by slavery. We must look for it in our fields and our forests, "where nature continues in unadulterated simplicity."\* Who

\* *Anim. Nat.* iv. 1-17, and see 238-243-245; especially, on the latter page, some prettily-translated lines from the *Spectator*.

does not believe the reluctance with which Goldsmith describes himself quitting that most beautiful part of creation? "These splendid inhabitants of air possess all those qualities that can soothe the heart and cheer the fancy. The brightest <sup>1772.</sup> colours, the roundest forms, the most active manners, and <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> the sweetest music. In sending the imagination in pursuit of these, in following them to the chirping grove, the screaming precipice, or the glassy deep, the mind naturally lost the sense of its own situation, and, attentive to their little sports, almost forgot the TASK of describing them. Innocently to amuse the imagination in this dream of life is wisdom . . every rank and state of mankind may find something to imitate in those delightful songsters, and we may not only employ the time, but mend our lives by the contemplation." \* The reader will not fail to mark a certain subdued sadness in this passage, and to that word Task will give the significance which Goldsmith by printing it in capitals intended it should have. Infinitely might such extracts, fresh as the summer fields and sunshine, be prolonged; and let me add that Goldsmith's intense love for all living creatures is but another form of his worship of nature. Nothing moves his indignation so strongly as any cruelty practised against them. His remarks in this section of his book, on artificial moulting (iv. 14), on the manner of training hawks (94), on the sadness of caged birds (261), simply express the spirit which rouses him always against every form of cruelty or pain. There is a touching passage (ii. 203-6) on that "humble useful creature," the ass, which might have been written by my uncle Toby himself. And who may resist the quaint kindly humour with which he celebrates another domestic creature equally serviceable and equally despised? Winding up a laughable statement of the absurdities of the gander with the sly remark that "it is probable there is not a more respectable animal on earth—to a goose," he thus continues of the latter: "I feel my obligations to this animal every word I write; for, however deficient a man's head may be, his pen is nimble enough upon

\* *Anim. Nat.* iv. 426-7.



“every occasion: it is happy indeed for us, that it requires no great effort to put it in motion” (iv. 408). Very touching, too, is the anecdote he relates of the she-fox and her cub (iii. 49), which <sup>1772.</sup> “happened while I was writing this history,” and to which <sup>Act. 44.</sup> he again refers in another passage. And it is the same humane feeling which elicits his disapproval of all efforts, however ingenious or laborious, to bring animals “under the trammels of human education. It may,” he admits of the animal so taught, “be an admirable object for human curiosity, but is very little advanced by all its learning in the road to its own felicity” (iii. 289). Nor is his pity or sympathy less strongly moved for poor little human children subjected prematurely to an intellectual torture for which their faculties are equally unprepared. “I have seen many a little philosophical martyr whom I wished, but was unable, to relieve” (i. 396).

Were it but for the humanity and beauty of such passages alone, then, this *Animated Nature* must surely always be considered as a surprising specimen of taskwork, and a most happy piece of imitation of nature; allowance being made for the circumstances in which its drudgery was undergone, and which the course his necessities now obliged him to take did not tend to relieve. “I have taxed my scanty circumstances in procuring books which are on the subject of all others the most expensive,” was a touching confession he did not scruple to make in the preface he did not live to see prefixed to the work. Pressed and hunted in other ways already by such “scanty circumstances,” he now induced Griffin to advance him what remained to be paid upon the copy-right; acknowledged the receipt and executed the assignment in June; and had then received and paid away the whole eight hundred guineas, while upwards of a third of his labour remained still unperformed.

Nor was this all. He had involved himself in an undertaking to Newbery to supply another tale like the *Vicar of Wakefield*; some years had elapsed since the unredeemed promise was made; and a portion of a tale submitted to the publisher had lately been

returned with intimation of disapproval. It appears to have been a narrative version of the plot of the *Good-natured Man*, and on that ground objected to. So much was long remembered by Miss Mary Horneck, to whom, and to her sister, Goldsmith afterwards read such chapters as he had written; \* and it may be worth stating in connection with this fact, which Hazlitt heard from Mrs. Gwyn herself in Northcote's painting-room, that Southey notices in his *Omniana* a fraud he supposes to have been practised on Goldsmith's reputation in France, by the announcement, in a list of books at the end of a volume published in the year of his death, of a translation from the English entitled "*Histoire de François Wills, ou le Triomphe de la Bienfaisance, par l'auteur du Ministre de Wakefield.*" It is suggested that this may have been the incomplete chapters left by Goldsmith, thought unworthy of publication here, concluded by some inferior hand, and sold to the French market; but the account I have received of the English original quite excludes the possibility of Goldsmith's having had anything whatever to do with it.†

Another labour that occupied Goldsmith in the Edgeware cottage was the abridgment of his *Roman History*; and this was probably the time when he tried unsuccessfully to lighten his various toil by means of extraneous assistance. Exceptions may of course be

\* "I have been informed by the lady who requested a lock of his hair before interment, that he once read to her several chapters of a novel in manuscript which he had in contemplation; but which he did not live to finish, now irrecoverably lost." Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 327. "Goldsmith had begun another novel, of which he read the first chapter to the Miss Hornecks a little while before his death." Northcote's *Conversations*, 169.

† "I read that *History of Francis Wills, or the Triumph of Benevolence*," writes Mr. Browning to me, "some twenty years ago: a miserable, two-volume, twaddling story of a sort of orphan,—i.e. Wills, whom his maiden aunt,—i.e. Benevolence Triumphant, brings up against the opposition of her kindred; he proving a scapegrace, and she gracious to . . . not the end; for, at the decline of her life, and a good way in the second volume, Benevolence marries some stingy Scotch Captain Macsomething, and instantly turns as stingy as he, or worse—dissecting the flints he only skinned—till the very last of all, of the life and volume together, when Benevolence does indeed triumph, in her return to the old way. So the poor author intended: whereas, you see, the devil and Captain Mac so managed that Malevolence triumphed with a vengeance, in giving the paternity of the book to Goldsmith!" (1852.)

stated to every rule, but it will be found, I think, that writers of the best style are generally the least able to find any relief in dictating to others. "When Doctor Goldsmith," says the kindly biographer of the good Jonas Hanway, "to relieve himself from <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> "the labour of writing, engaged an amanuensis, he found "himself incapable of dictation; and after eyeing each other some "time, unable to proceed, the Doctor put a guinea in his hand, and "sent him away: but it was not so with Mr. Hanway; he could "compose faster than any person could write."\* No doubt; nor was such information as Mr. Hanway had to contribute at all likely to be the worse for his fast composition, whereas Goldsmith perhaps eyed his wondering amanuensis all the more wistfully and silently because of a misgiving connected with the somewhat scant information to be then and there imparted. Still, of his historical taskwork it is to be said quite as truly as of the delightful *Animated Nature*, that such defects of imperfect research as it exhibited were counterbalanced by simplicity of diction, a lucid beauty of narration, and unaffectedness of style; and that schoolboys have more profited by the one than lost by the other. Johnson said, as we have seen, that he would make a very fine natural history book, though, if he could distinguish a cow from a horse, *that* he believed to be the extent of his scientific knowledge; and the same will have to be said of his other history books, even though his general historical knowledge should be measured by the anecdote of Gibbon's visit to him in the Temple some few months hence, when he looked up from the manuscript of his *Grecian History* which he happened to be writing, asked of his scholarly visitor the name of the Indian king who gave Alexander so much trouble, and, on Gibbon facetiously answering *Montezuma*, gravely wrote it down.

But his ignorance in this and other respects I have shown to be absurdly overstated. The purse he had so often to take out was not so often empty. What Johnson says may be true of the few last years of his life, that he was at no pains to fill his mind with

\* Pugh's *Remarkable Occurrences in the Life of Jonas Hanway, Esq.* 223-224.



knowledge ; that, transplanting it from one place to another, it did not settle, and so he could not tell what was in his own books ;—but this should be limited by those years of his life, judged by the distractions which then beset him, and accompanied with <sup>1772.</sup> the admission which Johnson did not omit, that the world <sup>Æt. 44.</sup> had taught him knowledge where books had not ; that whatever he wrote, he did better than any other man could do ; that he well deserved his place in Westminster Abbey, and that every year he lived he would have deserved it better.\* It is astonishing how many thoughts, familiar now as household words, originated with Goldsmith,† even to the famous saying that it was not so much to express as to conceal our wants that language had been given us ;‡ while, loose and ill-considered as much of his philosophy occasionally is, his *Essays* and *Citizen of the World* contain views

\* *Boswell*, vii. 96.

† Who has not laughed at Sheridan's remark to his son, on the latter proposing to descend a coal-pit for the mere pleasure of saying he had done so, which Beau Tibbs anticipated in his remark to the man who would have justified the large price he demanded for a seat to see the coronation ? "What you can bring away is the pleasure of having it to say that you saw the coronation." "Blast me !" cries Tibbs, "if that be all, there is no need of paying for that, since I am resolved to have that pleasure, whether I am there or no !" Letter cv.

‡ Already referred to (i. 209). The maxim is Jack Spindle's ; "that he who best knows how to keep his necessities private, is the most likely person to have them redressed ; and that the true use of speech is not so much to express our wants as to conceal them." But the original of this thought, which Talleyrand turned to such profligate use in his maxim that speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts, has been traced to a fine passage in the Sermons of South. "It is looked upon," says that noble preacher, "as a great piece of weakness and unfitness for business (forsooth) for a man to be so clear and open, as really to think not only what he says but what he swears : and when he makes any promise to have the least intent of performing it. . . What between French fashions and Italian dissimulations, the old generous English spirit which heretofore made this nation so great in the eyes of all the world round about it, seems utterly lost and extinct ; and we are degenerated into a mean, sharking, fallacious, undermining way of converse ; there being a snare and a trepan almost in every word we hear, and every action we see. Men speak with designs of mischief, and therefore they speak in the dark. In short, this seems to be the true, inward judgment of all our politick sages, that speech was given to the ordinary sort of men whereby to communicate their mind ; but to wise men, whereby to conceal it." Which Young, speaking of precisely the same court influences, afterwards condensed into this couplet :

Where Nature's end of language is declined,  
And men talk only to conceal their mind."



of life and economy, political and social, which for subtlety and truth Burke never surpassed, nor the far-seeing wisdom of Adam Smith himself. To that fragmentary way of writing, the resource  
 1772.  
 Æt. 44. of his days of poverty, his present narrow necessities seemed again to have driven him back; for, besides the Edgeware labours just named, the latest of the *Essays* in the collection which now bears that title were written in the present year. They appeared in a new magazine, started by his acquaintance Captain (so called, but strictly Lieutenant) Thompson\* and other members of the old Wednesday-club: and comprised a highly humorous paper of imaginary Scotch marriages, for which he stole some sentences from the Landlady in the *Good-natured Man*; a whimsical narrative of a noted sleep-walker; a gracefully-written notice of Shenstone's Leasowes, full of sympathy for the kind thoughtful poet;† and a capital attack, as full of good-humour as of hard hitting, on the sentimental school of comedy.

\* For an account of Thompson, who, through Garrick's interest with Lord Sandwich and Sir Edward Hawke, obtained a command, and died a Commodore off the coast of Africa, see *Gar. Cor.* i. 402, and Percival Stockdale's *Memoirs*, ii. 26-8. As I may probably not again refer to this latter book, I here mention an affecting remark of Johnson's recorded in it which may help to make us very tolerant of whatever occasional harshnesses have been attributed to him here or elsewhere. The subject of drinking being mentioned, and Mrs. Williams wondering what pleasure men could take in making beasts of themselves, Johnson replied that very strong inducements existed to such excess, "for he who makes a *beast* of himself gets rid of the "pain of being a *man*." (ii. 109.) On another occasion, however, in the year before Goldsmith's death, he gave a happier turn to the same subject. The passage is as curious and characteristic as anything Boswell has preserved for us. "Dr. Johnson observed, that our drinking less than our ancestors was owing to the "change from ale to wine. I remember, he added, when all the *decent* people in "Lichfield got drunk every night, and were not the worse thought of. Ale was "cheap, so you pressed strongly. When a man must bring a bottle of wine, he is "not in such haste. . . . I remember when people in England changed a shirt only "once a week: a Pandour, when he gets a shirt, greases it to make it last. Formerly, "good tradesmen had no fire but in the kitchen; never in the parlour, except on "Sunday. My father, who was a magistrate of Lichfield, lived thus. They never "began to have a fire in the parlour, but on leaving off business, or some great "revolution of their life." *Bos.* iv. 55-6.

† See *ante*, l. p. 169.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## PUPPETS AT DRURY-LANE AND ELSEWHERE.

1772.

THE resolute attack on sentimental comedy which I have traced to Goldsmith's hand in the new magazine, showed chiefly his own renewed anxieties in the direction of the stage. Another successful venture there was indeed become almost his only hope, <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> in the desperate distress to which he appeared to be verging; yet the old fears had been interposed by Colman, on the old hackneyed ground. The comedy of which the first draft had been completed the year before, and which in the interval had been re-cast and strengthened, was now in the hands of the Covent-garden manager; whose tedious suspended judgments made Goldsmith long for even Garrick's tender mercies. Indeed he had no present reason to think that the Drury-lane manager would not have treated him with unusual consideration, if his previous promise had not bound him to the other house; for the recent good understanding between them continued, and is observable in many little incidents of the time. The libellers who knew Garrick's weakness, for example, now assailed him through the side of Goldsmith; and not only was the latter accused of harbouring low writers busied in abusing his new ally\* (which Garrick had sense enough

\* A correspondent who signs himself "D. W—s," writes on the 2nd Oct. 1772 to warn Garrick that a very bitter letter against him, just published by Bladon, had been written by a young man who is making himself known as a first-rate genius. "I who know your merits as well as your faults, would wish you would take method to undeceive this young man. His ears are always filled with accounts of your

to laugh at), but Kenrick accused them both of conspiring against himself, and taunted the Drury-lane manager with his new literary favourites. "My literary favourites," Garrick cleverly retorted, "are men of the greatest honour and genius in this nation, and have all had the honour, with myself, of being particularly abused by you. Your pretence of my having, in conjunction with Doctor Goldsmith and others, abused you in the *Morning Chronicle*, I most solemnly protest is false; nay more, I never saw such abuse, or heard of it, till within this hour."\* That still he has his laugh against Goldsmith seems also obvious enough, but it is all in good-humour. A little before this date Richard Burke was writing to him from Grenada, to which after more than one "absence" in London he was again returned, and after perpetrating a bad joke which he protests he thinks witty, "Let Goldsmith," he adds, "when he comes from France, be the judge. I hope that he will not leave his poetry there: let him bring home as many French airs as he pleases; I would have his song continue to be plain English. His poetry is all I can now have a concern in; half the convex world intrudes between me and his old or new acquired accomplishments of any other kind."† And far better would Garrick have employed himself in giving Goldsmith practical proof, in connection with his new comedy, of the new interest in him which his *Correspondence* thus evinces, than in pursuing that labour of manage-

"villany. His name is Williams; he is intimate at Captain Pye's. Goldsmith knows him, and I have seen him go into Johnson's, but perhaps it was for music. Rice, the instructor of English, was with him last night in the front box of Drury-lane, and they seemed very intimate." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 487. What makes the signature of this letter rather curious is the fact that John Kemble has written on his copy of the *Letter to Garrick* alluded to (now in the British Museum) the name of David Williams as its writer. For a memoir of Williams, see *Chalmers*, and the *Gent. Mag.* for 1816. He was founder of the Literary Fund. (1852.) See also, for an episode in Garrick's life highly creditable to him, in which Williams plays an important part, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 349-57. (1870.)

\* *Garrick Correspondence*, ii. 341. In the same letter Garrick tells Kenrick: "Sir, I would have honoured you by giving the satisfaction of a gentleman, if you could (as Shakespeare says) have screwed your courage to the sticking place, to have taken it."

† *Gar. Correspondence*, i. 401-2.



CHARLES JAMES FOX.



EDMUND BURKE.





ment which just now unluckily engaged him, and excluded every other.

One of the greatest mistakes of Garrick's life was committed at the end of this year. He had of late, needlessly suspecting <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> a failure in his own continued powers of attraction, greatly overdone the ornamental part of his scenery\* and general management; but this was a venial fault. I refer to a graver trespass on good taste, which threw into the shadow all former like transgressions. He had, in other years, made many foul assaults upon Shakespeare in the way of stage adaptation; without scruple he had turned plays into operas, and comedies into farces; he had professed to correct the trash of Davenant, Cibber, and Tate with quite as doleful trash of his own; he had profaned the affecting catastrophe of *Romeo and Juliet*, made a pantomime of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and given what Bishop Warburton had the bad taste to call "an elegant form to that monstrous composition" the *Winter's*

\* I have before me such a pleasant unpublished letter from the great painter Gainsborough remonstrating with him on this point, and altogether so characteristic of the writer, that I think it worth subjoining, postscript and all. Indeed, in the postscript, containing allusion to the fine portrait of Garrick which Gainsborough had lately painted, some will probably find the principal reason why the rest of the letter was written. "SUNDAY MORNING (1772). MY DEAR SIR, When the streets are paved with Brilliants, and the skies made of Rainbows, I suppose you'll be contented and satisfied with red, blue, and yellow. It appears to me that Fashion, let it consist of false or true taste, will have its run like a runaway horse; for when eyes and ears are thoroughly debauched by glare and noise, the returning to modest truth will seem very gloomy for a time; and I know you are cursedly puzzled how to make this retreat, without putting out your lights and losing the advantage of all our new discoveries of transparent painting, &c &c—how to satisfy your tawdry friends whilst you steal back into the mild evening gleam and quiet middle term. I'll tell you, my sprightly Genius, how this is to be done. Maintain all your light, but spare the poor abused colors till the eye rests and recovers. Keep up your music by supplying the place of *Noise* by more sound, more harmony and more tune, and split that cursed Fife and Drum. Whatever so great a Genius as Mr. Garrick may say or do to support our false taste, he must feel the truth of what I am now saying, that neither our Plays, Paintings, or Music are any longer real works of invention, but the abuse of Nature's lights and what has already been invented in former times. Adieu my dear Friend. Any commands to Bath.—T. G. A word to the wise; if you let your Portrait hang up so high only to consult your Room, it never can look without a hardness of countenance, and the painting flat; it was calculated for breast-high, and will never have its effect or likeness otherwise."

*Tale*;—but he did not achieve his master-stroke till the close of the present year, when he produced *Hamlet with Alterations*. This he very justly characterised as the most imprudent thing he had ever done in his life; but having sworn, as he says, not to leave the stage till he had “rescued that noble play from all the rubbish of the fifth act,”\* he had cleared off the rubbish in a way that M. de Voltaire himself, who doubtless suggested it, might have envied. The Grave-diggers were gone, Osrick was gone, Yorick was gone; and Hamlet had come back from England such a very tiger, that anybody hearing his *ohs* and *ahs*, his startling exclamations and furious resolves, would have taken him for Cibber's Richard. More deplorable than all, men of wit and knowledge were found to second this mountebank outrage; and even George Steevens (it is difficult to believe he was not laughing at Garrick as he laughed at everybody) recommended that the omissions should be thrown into a farce, to be acted immediately after the tragedy.† But though the stage was degraded by this absurdity for eight years, its author never dared to print it, for “it was greatly disliked by the million,” says Mr. Victor the prompter, “who love Shakespeare with all his glorious absurdities, and will not suffer a bold intruder to cut him up.” Not long before, Foote had proposed a parody on the Stratford *Ode* in which a fellow to represent the nation should do homage to Garrick, reverentially repeating “A nation's taste depends on you, perhaps a nation's virtue too;” to which Garrick should graciously answer “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” *Hamlet with Alterations* now justified that witty malice; Murphy's parody‡ fairly turned the laugh against its author;

\* See his Memorandum to Sir W. Young; *Garrick Correspondence*, ii. 126.

† “This play of Shakespeare, in particular,” he has the cool impertinence to write, “resembles a looking-glass exposed for sale, which reflects alternately the funeral and the puppet-show, the venerable beggar soliciting charity, and the blackguard rascal picking a pocket.” And again: “I cannot answer for our good friends in the gallery. You had better throw what remains of the piece into a farce, to appear immediately afterwards. No foreigner who should happen to be present at the exhibition, would ever believe it was formed out of the loppings and excrescences of the tragedy itself. You may entitle it, *The Grave Diggers; with the pleasant Humours of Osrick, the Danish Macaroni.*” *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 451-452.

‡ See Foot, *Life*, 256-74.

and he had better never have gone to France, or heard the name of M. de Voltaire.

France had this year, in Burke, a visitor from a more real stage; yet who brought back such visions of the court he had seen at Versailles, and of the young dauphiness Marie Antoinette, as might better have become one of Garrick's enchanted palaces than that hideous mockery of the Trianon.\* He saw little but an age of chivalry extant still, where something should have been visible to him of an age of starvation and retribution; and, through the glittering formal state that surrounded the pomp of Louis the well-beloved, not a shadow of the antic Hunger, mocking the state and grinning at the pomp, would seem to have revealed itself to Edmund Burke. "Beautiful," says Carlyle, in his immortal *History*, "beautiful if seen from afar, resplendent like a sun; seen near at hand, a mere sun's atmosphere, hiding darkness, confused ferment of ruin!" Sixteen years earlier, Goldsmith had seen it near at hand: and now he and Burke were together on his friend's return, and together visited an exhibition in the Haymarket which had in it about as much reality as that Versailles show. This was *The Puppets* in Panton-street. Great was the celebrity of these small, well-pulled, ingenious performers; for nobody could detect the wires. Burke praised the dexterity of one puppet in particular, who tossed a pike with military precision; and "Psha!" remarked Goldsmith with some warmth, "I can do it better myself." Boswell would have us believe that he was seriously jealous of the so famous fantoccini! † "He went home with Mr. Burke to supper,

\* "Mr. Burke is returned from Paris, where he was so much the mode that, happening to dispute with the philosophers, it grew the fashion to be Christians. St. Patrick himself did not make more converts." *Walpole's Letters to Lady Ossory*, i. 54. March 11, 1773.

† Cradock, who says he was with Goldsmith at the puppet-show, implies that the whole thing was a joke; that everybody was speaking in exaggerated phrase of the puppets, and that Goldsmith simply took his part in the solemn fun. *Memoirs*, i. 232. In a later volume (iv. 280) he adds, "Dr. Goldsmith spoke most highly of the performance in Panton-street, and talked about bringing out a comedy 'of his own there in ridicule.' The reader will of course remark that this is no contradiction of Boswell's story. It is presumable that Cradock was not present on the night of Burke's visit, or he would have named him; and of course Goldsmith



"and broke his shin by attempting to exhibit to the company how "much better he could jump over a stick than the puppets." \*

The anecdote is too pleasant to be gravely objected to; but <sup>1772.</sup> might he not only mean that the puppets jumped even <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> worse than he did? Such are the resemblances, moreover, between the actual world and the puppet-show, that what was meant for a laugh at the one might have passed for an attack on the other.

And here it will be worth adding, that from a person who, in the larger of the two theatres, and with notable reference to those puppets of Versailles just mentioned, was afterwards doomed to be busy in both pulling and snapping the strings, Goldsmith received this year a quite voluntary tribute to his fame. A correspondent "in the humble station of an officer of excise" sent him a pamphlet-memorial of the case of his brother officers; told him that the literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith (whom he addresses *Honoured Sir*) had induced him to present it; said that he had some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine or anything else, as a singular favour; and added that the Doctor's un-

may have visited the puppets many times. Indeed Murphy has given a not materially different version of the story, as related to him by Johnson. "It happened "that he went with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Goldsmith to see the Fantoccini. . . The "entertainment being over, the three friends retired to a tavern. Johnson and Sir Joshua talked with pleasure of what they had seen; and says Johnson, in a tone of "admiration, 'How the little fellow brandished his spontoon!' 'There is nothing "in it,' replied Goldsmith, starting up with impatience: 'Give me a spontoon: I "can do it as well myself.'" *Essay*, 54. Davies had mentioned the same story (ii. 151) before either Boswell or Murphy. "The Doctor was asked how he liked "those automats? He replied he was surprised at the applause bestowed on the "little insignificant creatures, for he could have performed their exercises much "better himself." One view of the incident remains, which it is fair to state. He might not unnaturally have been jealous of the money made by the puppets. They had become almost as much the rage as they had been sixty years before, when Swift and all the wits used to enjoy nothing so much as "concluding the night at "the puppet-show;" and poor struggling De Foe, anticipating perhaps something of the feeling with which Goldsmith left Panton-street, remarks that the celebrated Mr. Powell, the manager of Punch Theatre, "by subscriptions and full houses hath "gathered such wealth as is sufficient to buy all the poets in England." *Les Soupirs de la Grande Bretagne* (1713).

\* Boswell, ii. 191, note.

known humble servant, and admirer, would take the liberty of waiting on him in a day or two. The writer was Thomas Paine,\* whom this pamphlet on the excise introduced to Franklin, whom Franklin within twelve months sent to America, who <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> transacted memorable business in the establishment of a republic there, and who became subsequently citizen of another as famous republic, and deputy in its National Convention for the department of Calais.

Goldsmith had suffered severe illness in the summer from a disease (strangury) induced by sedentary habit; on its return in the autumn, he had obtained such relief from the fashionable fever-medicine of the day as to become almost as great a bigot as Horace Walpole to the miraculous powers of James's powders; and now, after visits to Mr. Cradoek, Lord Clare, and Mr. Langton, he was settled for the winter in London. I trace him to Covent-garden theatre with George Steevens on an occasion so special (it was to see Macklin, now nearly eighty years of age, perform the part of *Iago*), that they had prevailed upon Johnson to accompany them.† We find him also again figuring at a masquerade in the town Ranelagh, "in an old English dress," Reynolds being one of the masqueraders, with the Horneck girls and their brother. This was the winter, I should add, when Northcote became Reynolds's pupil, and he remembered none of the Leicester-square visitors of the time so vividly as Goldsmith. He had expressed great eagerness to see him; soon afterwards the poet came to dine; and "This is Doctor Goldsmith," said Sir Joshua; "pray "why did you wish to see him?" Confused by the suddenness of the question, which was put with designed abruptness, the youth could only stammer out "Because he is a *notable* man;" whereupon, the word in its ordinary sense appearing very oddly misapplied, both Goldsmith and Reynolds burst out laughing, and the latter protested that in future his friend should always be *the notable man*. Northcote explains that he meant to say he was a man of

\* The letter is given in the *Percy Memoir*, 96-98.

† *Europ. Mag.* xli. 17-18.

note, or eminence; and adds that he was very unaffected and good-natured, but seemed totally ignorant of the art of painting, and indeed often with great gaiety confessed as much.\* Nevertheless, he used at Burke's table to plunge into art-discussions with Barry, when the latter returned from abroad in the year following this; and would punish Barry's dislike of Sir Joshua, manifested even thus early, by disputing openly the subtlest dogmas with that irritable genius, or perhaps by laughing secretly as he put in practice a strict adherence to the two rules which formed George Primrose's qualification for setting up as cognoscento: "The one always to observe, the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains; and the other, to praise the works of Pietro Perugino." (Lord Byron delighted in the truth and wit of these rules, and often repeated them to Mr. Rogers in Italy.) With Burke himself, Northcote says, he overheard Goldsmith sharply disputing one day in Sir Joshua's painting-room about the character of the King; when, so grateful was he for some recent patronage of his comedy (it was a few months after the present date), and so outrageous and unsparing was Burke's anti-monarchical invective, that, unable any longer to endure it, he took up his hat and left the room.†

Another argument which Northcote overheard, at Sir Joshua's dinner-table, was between Johnson and Goldsmith; when the latter put *Venice Preserved* next to Shakespeare for its merit as an acting play, and was loudly contradicted by the other. "Pooh!" roared Johnson. "There are not forty decent lines in the whole of

\* *Life of Reynolds*, i. 249. He said the same thing more naturally in a letter to his brother at the time. "He seems an unaffected and most good-natured man, but knows very little about pictures, as he often confesses with a laugh." And see Hazlitt's *Conversations*, 40-1. This is hardly consistent, the reader will remark, with Miss Hawkins's anecdote about the Vandyke, *ante*, 154.

† "Goldsmith and Burke had often violent disputes about politics; the one being a staunch Tory, and the other at that time a Whig and outrageous anti-courtier. One day he came into the room, when Goldsmith was there, full of ire and abuse against the late king, and went on in such a torrent of the most unqualified invective that Goldsmith threatened to leave the room. The other, however, persisted; and Goldsmith went out, unable to bear it any longer. So much for Mr. Burke's pretended consistency and uniform loyalty!" Hazlitt's *Conversations with Northcote*, 40.



"it. What stuff are these!" And then he quoted, as prose, Pierre's scornful reproach to the womanish Jaffier. "What feminine tales hast thou been listening to, of unair'd shirts, eatarrrhs, and tooth-ache got by thin-soled shoes?" To which the uncon-<sup>1772.</sup>  
vinced disputant sturdily replied, "True! To be sure! That <sup>Æt. 41.</sup>  
"is very like Shakespeare." Goldsmith had no great knowledge of the higher secrets of criticism, and was guilty of very monstrous and very silly heresies against the master-poet (as in his paper on metaphor in the *Essays*); but here his notion was right enough. He meant to say that Shakespeare had the art possessed only by the greatest poets, of placing in natural connection the extremes of the familiar and imaginative: \* which Garrick would have done well to remember before he began to botch *Hamlet*. Another impression which remained with Northcote's old age, derived from these scenes of his youth, was that the "set" at Sir Joshua's were somewhat intolerant of such as did not belong to their party; jealous of enlarging it, and chary of admitting merit to any new-comer. Thus he remembered a new poem coming out that was sent to Reynolds, who had instructed his servant Ralph to bring it in after dinner: when presently Goldsmith laid hold of it, fell into a rage with it before he had read a dozen lines, and exclaiming "What wretched stuff is here! what cursed nonsense *that* is!" kept all the while cutting at every line almost through the paper with his thumb nail. "Nay, nay," said Sir Joshua, snatching the volume, "don't do so: you shall not spoil my book, neither."†

\* *Life of Reynolds*, i. 288. Northcote seems long to have remembered this. He asked Hazlitt towards the close of his life what he thought of the *Vicar of Wakefield*; Hazlitt replied characteristically, "what everybody else did;" on which Northcote added that there was that mixture of the ludicrous and the pathetic running through it which particularly delighted him, because it gave a stronger resemblance to nature; and went on to say that he thought this justified Shakespeare in mingling up farce and tragedy together. Life itself was a tragi-comedy. Instead of being pure, everything was chequered. If you went to an execution, you would perhaps see an apple-woman in the greatest distress because her stall was overturned, at which you could not help smiling. See *Conversations*, 169-70.

† *Life of Reynolds*, i. 250. In Hazlitt's *Conversations of Northcote* (274-5) this anecdote is almost literally repeated; as I find in several instances, on comparing the two books; and I suspect, for the most part, that it is fancy rather than memory which in the later book puts in the embellishment and variations.



In like manner, Northcote adds, he recollects their making a dead set at Cumberland. They never admitted him as one of themselves; they excluded him from the club; Reynolds never asked him <sup>1772.</sup> to dinner; and from any room where he was, Goldsmith <sup>Æt. 44.</sup> would have flung out as if a dragon had been there!\* It was not until his life was just about to close that he became tolerant of the condescending attentions of the fretful Cumberland.

To these recollections of Northcote, some by Mr. Cradock may be added. When it was proposed one day to go down to Lichfield, and, in honour of Johnson and Garrick, act the *Beaux' Stratagem* among themselves there, all the famous people of the club taking part in it, "then," exclaimed Goldsmith, "I shall certainly 'play Scrub.† I should like of all things to try my hand at that 'character.'‡ One would have liked no less to have seen him play it, and heard the roar that would have given a personal turn to the cunning serving-man's famous assertion, 'I believe *they* talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.' But his brogue would have been a difficulty. Even Burke's brogue was no small disadvantage to him; and Goldsmith had hardly improved his, since those Dunciad-days when he would object to the exquisite bad rhyming of *key* with *be* ("let *key* be called *kee*, and then it will 'rhyme with *be*," said one of his criticisms for Griffiths, "but not 'otherwise') : indeed, says Cooke, he rather cultivated his brogue than got rid of it.§ Malone's authority would have us doubt, too,

\* *Conversations*, 275. This is a little overstated; but in substance perhaps correct enough. Cumberland is very courteous in his public mention of Reynolds in his *Memoirs*, but his private letters exhibit a different tone. See *post*, chap. xx.

† Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 209.

‡ *Ibid.* iv. 283.

§ "He expressed himself upon common subjects with a plainness bordering upon rusticity, and often in words very ill chosen. He rather cultivated (than endeavoured to get rid of) his brogue." *European Magazine*, xxiv. 258. At the same time the proof of a spoken brogue from a supposed written one, such as I have glanced at in the text, is seldom to be relied on. Pope might be proved an Irishman indisputably in this way; and it might be shown, from numberless such rhymes in his *Satires*, that Young's Castalian spring had been largely filled from the Liffey. It is necessary to keep in mind, too, what Johnson says: "I remember . . . when I published the plan for my Dictionary, Lord Chesterfield told me that the word *great* should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *state*; and Sir William Yonge sent me word that it should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *seat*, and that none but an

whether his emphasis, even for Scrub, would always have been right; seeing that, being at dinner one day with him and Johnson, he gave an example to prove that poets ought to read and pronounce verse with more accuracy and spirit than other men,<sup>1772.</sup> by beginning the ballad *At Upton on the Hill* with a most emphatic ox.\* Farquhar's humour, nevertheless, might have gained as much as it lost; and the private play could not have spared such an actor. Richard Burke reinforced the party soon after this with his wit and his whim;† Garrick having succeeded, where Edmund supposed that his own influence had failed, in getting from Lord North another year's leave of absence from Grenada;‡ and his return led to the establishment of a temporary dining-club at the St. James's coffee-house, the limited numbers of the Gerrard-street club excluding both him and Garrick from present membership there. Cumberland, who became afterwards an occasional guest, correctly attributes its origin to Burke, though he misstates everything else connected with it;§ and here Cradock, mistaking it for *The* club,

"Irishman would pronounce it *grait*. Now here were two men of the highest rank, the one, the best speaker in the House of Lords, the other, the best speaker in the House of Commons, differing entirely." *Boswell*, iii. 191.

\* Malone's *Life of Dryden* prefixed to the prose writings, i. 518. "He was immediately called upon to support his argument by an example; a request with which he readily complied; and he repeated the first stanza of the ballad beginning with the words 'At Upton on the Hill,' with such false emphasis, by marking the word *on* very strongly, that all the company agreed he had by no means established his position."

† "Here lies honest Richard, whose fate I must sigh at;  
Alas! that such frolic should now be so quiet.  
What spirits were his! what wit and what whim!  
Now breaking a jest—and now breaking a limb;  
Now wrangling and grumbling to keep up the ball;  
Now teasing and vexing—yet laughing at all!  
In short, so provoking a devil was Dick,  
That we wish'd him full ten times a day at Old Nick;  
But, missing his mirth and agreeable vein,  
As often we wish'd to have Dick back again." *Retaliation*.

‡ See the Letter of Sir Grey Cooper, in *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 418.

§ I quote the remark of Northcote (*Life of Reynolds*, i. 214) on Cumberland's inflated account of it. "Such a society might no doubt have been highly agreeable; but its description, thus strongly marked by Mr. Cumberland, seems rather drawn up in contradistinction to the Literary Club, of which he was not a member. This

remembered to have heard much animated talk, in which Richard Burke made himself very prominent, and seemed the most free and easy of the company. Its members, who had the privilege of introducing strangers to their meetings, used to dine at each other's houses also, less frequently; and Goldsmith indulged himself now and then in very oddly assorted assemblages at his chambers after the dinner, which, in allusion to the fashionable ball-rooms of the day, he called his "little Cornelys."

More rarely, at meetings which became afterwards more famous, the titled people who jostled against writers and artists at Shelburne-house, in Berkeley-square, might be seen wondering or smiling at the simple-looking Irishman who had written the *Deserted Village*. There were Mrs. Vesey's parties, too, more choice and select than Mrs. Montagu's, her friend and imitator; and at both we have traces of Goldsmith: "your wild genius," as Mrs. Vesey's statelier friend Mrs. Carter calls him.\* These ladies had got the notion of their blue-stocking routs from the Du Duffands and L'Espinasses, at the last French peace; but alas! the Montesquieus, Voltaires, and Du Châtelets, the De Launays, Hainaults, De Choiseuls, and Condorcets, were not always forthcoming in Hill-street or Portman-square. In truth, they seem to have been dull enough, those much-talked-about réunions; though sometimes enlivened by Mrs. Vesey's forgetfulness of her own name, and sparkling at all times with Mrs. Montagu's diamonds and bows.† Mrs. Thrale's were better; and though the lively little

"society at the British coffee-house must, however, with the exception of Johnson's conversation, have made him amends for any exclusion from the other: for here were Foote, Fitzherbert, Garrick, Macpherson; Doctors Carlisle, Robinson, and Beattie; Caleb Whiteford; and though last, not least, Sir Joshua Reynolds, who introduced Goldsmith as a member immediately previous to the representation of *She Stoops to Conquer*."

\* *Letters*, iv. 110.

† See *Wraxall's Memoirs*, i. 144—68. I must quote that admirable distinction which Johnson made a few years later, when a coolness arose between himself and Mrs. Montagu, and he lost even the moderate satisfaction of these réunions. "Mrs. Montagu has dropt me," he said to Boswell. "Now, sir, there are people whom one should like very well to drop, but would not wish to be dropped by." He certainly was vain, adds his biographer, of the society of ladies, and could make himself very agreeable to them when he chose it. viii. 46-7.



lady made a favourite jest of Goldsmith's simple ways, he with Johnson passed happy days both in Southwark and Streatham.

Still, perhaps, his happiest time was when he had Johnson to himself; when there were no listeners to talk for; when, <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> to his half-childish frolicking absurdities, Johnson lowered all that was predominant or intolerant in his great fine nature; and together they came sporting from Gerrard-street to the Temple, or, when the club did not meet, had supper by themselves at an adjoining tavern in Soho. This was that once famous *Jack's*, since *Walker's*, in Dean-street, kept by a singer of Garrick's company (Jack Roberts), and patronised by Garrick and his friends; which, in all but the life that departed from it when *they* departed, to this day exists unchanged; quite unvexed by disturbance or improvement, haunted by the ghosts of guests that are gone, but not much visited by guests that live, a venerable relic of the *still life* of Goldsmith's age possessed by an owner who is venerable as itself, and whose memory, faithful to the past, now lives altogether with the shades that inhabit there.\* Of many pleasant "tête-à-tête suppers" this was the scene; and here Goldsmith would seem boldly to have perpetrated very ancient sallies of wit, to half-grumbling half-laughing accompaniment from Johnson. "Sir," said the sage one night, as they supped off rumps and kidneys, "these rumps are pretty little things; but then a man must eat a great many of them before he fills his belly." "Aye, but how many of them," asked Goldsmith innocently, "would reach to the moon?" "To the moon!" laughed Johnson; "ah, Goldy, I fear that exceeds your calculation." "Not at all, sir," says Goldsmith, "I think I could tell." "Pray then, sir," says the other, "let us hear." "Why," and here Goldsmith instinctively, no doubt, got as far from Johnson as he could, "*one*, if it were long enough." "Well, sir, I have deserved it," growled the philosopher. "I

\* 1848. It exists (1852) no longer; and I fear that the venerable Walker, from whom I had received attentions before writing those lines in the text, and who was supposed to be fabulously rich, died not long ago in the parish workhouse. To the last, however, on his card inviting custom, he had courteously informed his friends that it was here "Johnson, Garrick, Goldsmith, and other literary characters of eminence" found entertainment in old days.



"should not have provoked so foolish an answer by so foolish a question." \*

But Goldsmith's mirth is from a heart now ill at ease. Every <sup>1772.</sup> day's uncertainty as to his comedy is become fraught with <sup>Æt. 44.</sup> serious consequence to him, and Colman still delays his answer. The recollection of former mortifications no doubt sadly recurred, and with it came back the old distrusts and bitter self-misgivings. Cooke informs us that Goldsmith accidentally, at this time, met with an old acquaintance in a chop-house (most probably himself, for he elsewhere complains that the Doctor's acquisition of more important friends had latterly made their intercourse infrequent), † and, mentioning that he had written a comedy about which the manager seemed to have great doubts, asked him to listen to the plot and give him his candid opinion of it. The Doctor, Cooke proceeds, then began to tell the particulars of his plot, in his strange, uncouth, deranged manner, from which his friend the critic could only make out that the principal part of the business turned upon one gentleman mistaking the house of another for an inn; at which the critic shook his head, and said "he was afraid the audience, under their then sentimental impressions, would think it too broad and farcical for comedy." Goldsmith looked very serious at this; paused for some time; and at last, taking the other by the hand, "piteously" exclaimed, "I am much obliged to you, my dear friend, for the candour of your opinion: but it is all I can do; for alas I find that my genius, if ever I had any, has of late totally deserted me." ‡ Alas, poor Goldy! It was the feeling that prompted this, and no other, which also prompted his innocent, vain absurdities; and which made him even think, if the same friend's account is to be accepted gravely, that "speechifying" was all a knack, and that he knew of nothing

\* *European Magazine*, xxiv. 262.

† I should add, that this feeling of their altered relations betrays itself in the remark with which he introduces the anecdote in the text, to the effect that Goldsmith at this time was "by turns vain and humble, coarse and refined, judicious and credulous," and that the incident occurred "in one of his humiliating moments."

‡ See Cooke's *Memoirs of Foote*, iii. 77-8.

to prevent himself making any day quite as good a speech as Edmund Burke.\* "How well this post-boy drives," said Johnson to Boswell, rubbing his hands with joy for the rapid motion: "now if Goldy were here, he'd say he could drive better." And <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Eel. 44.</sub> simply because he could not drive at all. Sadly distrusting what he could do, he thought to set the balance straight by bragging of what he could not do. At the bottom of it all was a blundering want of confidence, not an exaggerated sense of it. "Not content with his fame in great things," says another newspaper writer of him, "he must have equal credit in small. If you were to meet him and boast of your shoes being well-blacked, the Doctor would look down at his own, and reply, 'I think mine are still better done.'" "He would never allow a superior in any art," says Garriek, "from writing poetry down to dancing a hornpipe." It is odd to contrast the eager spirit of detraction in which this charge is so often repeated of him, with the real in-offensiveness of what is implied in it. Happy the man, said Montaigne, who can conceal his vanity; most harmless the man who confesses it in any such form as this, we must surely all of us perceive. What possible injury could result to any one from it? Here, as in other cases, extremes blend into their opposites, and the weakness loses whatever we ordinarily connect with it of the malignant or the offensive.

\* Admirably has it been said by Lord John Russell (in his preface to the sixth volume of Moore's *Diary*), that of all kinds of vanity "the worst is *that which makes little display*, but is continually at work in depreciating others that our own superiority may become conspicuous." *Valeat quantum*, I subjoin Cooke's speechifying anecdote, simply premising that he must have derived it from hearsay, not being himself a member of the club referred to, and that it bears very evident marks of exaggeration: "He was one night at the club at St. James's-street, when the company were praising a speech which Mr. Burke had made that day in the House of Commons. This was enough to set Goldsmith agoing, who said speechifying was all a knack, and that he would venture to make as good a speech in either Latin, Greek, or English. The company took him at his word; but, to spare him the difficulties of the dead languages, would be content with a trial in English. The Doctor instantly mounted a chair, but could not get on above a sentence without the most evident embarrassment. 'Well,' says he, after a time, 'I find this won't do, therefore I'll write my speech.' 'No, Doctor,' said the company, 'we don't question your talents for writing, it was speaking you engaged for.' 'Well, well,' says the Doctor, 'I'm out of luck now, but you may depend on it, as I said before, that oratory is a mere knack, which any man of education may practise with success in a very little time.'" *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 261.

## CHAPTER XV.

### *SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.*

1772—1773.

NEVER was anything like a tone of doleful distrust so little called for as in the case of the comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer*.

<sup>1772-</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 44.</sup> Goldsmith had here again, as in the *Good-natured Man*, taken his stand on the sincere broad ground of character and humour, where time has fixed him so firmly. The final critical verdict has passed, which saves any further criticism on this last legacy of laughter he was now to leave us. Many are the sterling comedies that hold possession of the stage, cleverly exacting much calm enjoyment, while they chasten all tendency to intemperate mirth: but the family of the Harcastles, Young Marlow, and Tony Lumpkin are not akin to those. Let the manager be chary of introducing them, who desires to keep the enjoyment of his audience within merely reasonable bounds. When Mr. Harcastle, anxious to initiate Diggory and his too familiar fellow-servants into the small decorums of social life, warns them against talkativeness, and tells them that if he should happen to say a good thing or tell a good story at table, they are not all of them to burst out laughing as if they formed part of the company, Diggory makes prompt answer, "Then ecod, your worship must "not tell the story of *Ould Grouse in the Gun-Room*: I can't help "laughing at that . . he! he! he! . . for the soul of me. We "have laughed at that these twenty years . . ha! ha! ha!" and his worship, joining in the laugh, admits the story is a good one

(surely it must have been a real one, and can no F S A exhume it, so as to tell us what it was ?) \* and consents to make it an exception. So must exception be made now and then in the case of comedies. With muscles only imperceptibly moved, we may sit out <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> half Mrs. Inchbald's *Collection*; but at *She Stoops to Conquer* we expand into a roar. The "Three Jolly Pigeons" itself never had greater fun going forward in it; and, though genteel critics have objected to the comedy that it contains low characters, just as Mrs. Harcastle objected to the ale-house, the whole spirit of the objection seems to fade before Tony's sensible remark, when his mother wants him to desert the Pigeons and disappoint the low fellows: "As for disappointing *them*, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint *myself*." }

But in truth that objection, strongly as it has been urged, is quite untenable, and the verdict of four generations of playgoers must be held to have definitively passed against the judgment of the fine-gentlemen critics. No one was so bitter about it as Horace Walpole, who protested that the heroine had no more modesty than Lady Bridget, that the author's wit was as much manqué as the lady's, that all the merit was in the comic situations, that, in short, the whole view of the piece was low humour, and no humour was in it.† The worth of a man's judgment of

\* "Grouse," Mr. Fitzgerald writes to me, "is a common name for sporting dogs in Ireland."

† *Letters to Lady Ossory*, i. 58, March 27, 1773. Something of this ill-humour, however, was probably due to the fact which Horace mentions in the same letter, that "the heat of the house and of this sultry March half-killed" him. Still I must add that when ample time had been interposed to induce a less spiteful tone of criticism, we find Walpole writing to his friend Mason (27th May, 1773), "Dr. Goldsmith has written a comedy—no, it is the lowest of all farces; it is not the subject I condemn, though very vulgar, but the execution. The drift tends to no moral, no edification of any kind—the situations, however, are well imagined, and make one laugh in spite of the grossness of the dialogue, the forced witticisms, and total improbability of the whole plan and conduct. But what disgusts me most is, that though the characters are very low, and aim at low humour, not one of them says a sentence that is natural, or marks any character at all. It is set up in opposition to sentimental comedy, and is as bad as the worst of them." *Correspondence with Mason*, i. 78. I must remind the reader, however, that it was a leading characteristic of Walpole warmly and perseveringly to resent every form of depreciation of his father's memory, and that repeatedly, from the outset of his



what is low, however, is perhaps not unfairly to be tested by comparison with his judgment of what is high, since the terms are but relative after all; and it may be well to interpose that, thinking thus of the author of *She Stoops to Conquer*, it was the belief of the same fastidious critic that the dramatic works of Mr.

<sup>1772.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 44.</sup> Jephson (who had happened to write a play founded on the *Castle of Otranto*) were destined to live for ages, and that his *Law of Lombardy* was superior to all Beaumont and Fletcher. How opposite is the truth to all this, as well in Mr. Goldsmith's as in Mr. Jephson's case, we can all of us now perceive and admit. As contrasted with merely low comedy, *Young Marlow* belongs to as genuine "high" comedy as anything in Farquhar or Vanbrugh. The idea of the part, with its whimsical bashfulness, its simple mistakes, its awkward dilemmas, is a favourite and familiar one with Goldsmith.

To the same family, though marked by traits perfectly distinct, belong Mr. Honeywood; Moses Primrose; and the credulous Chinese Citizen who intrusts his watch to that beautiful young lady in the streets, who with so much generosity takes upon herself the trouble of getting it mended for him. There is as little of the mere farcical in *Young Marlow* as in any of these. The high comic intention is never lost in the merely ludicrous situation. In the transition from stammering modesty with Miss Harcastle, to easy familiarity with the supposed barmaid, the character does not lose its identity; for the over-assumption of ease, and the ridiculous want of it, are perceived to have exactly the same origin. The nervous effort is the same in the excess of bashfulness, as when it tries to rattle itself off by an excess of impudence. It is not simply one disguise flung aside for another; the constitutional timidity is kept always ludicrously prominent, but by fine and delicate touches. In like manner, Mr. Harcastle and his wife have

literary life until now, Goldsmith had given occasion for this resentment. Only a year or two before the present date, he had remarked of the great Sir Robert, in characterising a satire by Swift in his introductory notices to his *Beauties of English Poetry*, "The severity of a poet, however, gave Walpole very little uneasiness. A man whose schemes, like this minister's, seldom extended beyond the exigency of the year, but little regarded the contempt of posterity."

the same degree of what may be called comic dignity. The jovial old 'squire, with his love for everything that's old, "old friends, "old times, old manners, old books, old wine," not forgetting his own interminable old stories, is just the man to have his <sup>1772.</sup> <sub>Æt. 44.</sub> house mistaken for an inn; and the man to resent it too, with something festive and enjoying in the very robustness of his rage. There is altogether, let me add, an exuberant heartiness and breadth of genial humour in the comedy, which seems of right to overflow into Tony Lumpkin.\* He may be farcical, as such lumpish, roaring, uncouth animal-spirits have a right to be: but who would abate a bit of Cousin Tony, stupid and cunning as he is, impudent yet sheepish, with his loutish love of low company, and his young-'squire sense of his "fortin"? There is never any misgiving about Goldsmith's fun and enjoyment. It is not obtained at the expense of any better thing. He does not snatch a joke out of a misery, or an ugliness, or a mortification; or anything that, apart from the joke, would be likely to give pain; which, with all his airy wit and refinement, was too much the trick of Sheridan. Whether it be enjoyment or mischief going on in one of Goldsmith's comedies, the predominant impression is hearty, jovial, and sincere. Though Tony *does* tie the tail of Mr. Harcastle's wig to the back of his chair, there is only the broader laugh when he wakes and pops his bald head full into old Mrs. Frizzle's face; † and nobody feels the worse when the same in-

\* What a capital invention the name seems to be in its nice adjustment to the character, but alas! (as poor Goldsmith himself was so fond of saying) there is nothing new under the sun. One of Mr. Bruce's Charles the First calendars reveals to us that a farming tenant of fen-land in Leicestershire in 1637 was Master "Anthonie Lumpkin." (*Dom. Cal.* Jan. 1, 1637-8.)

† This incident was but the counterpart of a trick played on himself during his last visit at Gosfield by the daughter of Lord Clare: some of whose recollections of her old friend and playfellow I will here take the opportunity of quoting from a letter which her younger son, the late Lord Nugent, wrote to me in contemplation of my second edition a few months before his death. He was then on his way to Greece. "Marseilles, Nov. 7, 1849. . . . She was, as you know, daughter of Robert Nugent, "Viscount Clare, afterwards Earl Nugent, in whose house, at Gosfield in Essex (now "the house of Mr. Barnard, member for Greenwich), and in Great George-street, "Westminster, Goldsmith used to pass much of his time, during her childhood. He "was never out of *his* childhood; and therefore he was very much her companion, "and she loved his memory dearly. Her impression of him, formed in those days,

corrigible Tony, after fearful joltings down Featherbed-lane, over Up-and-down Hill, and across Heavy-tree Heath, lodges his mother in the horse-pond. The laugh clears the atmosphere all  
<sup>1772.</sup>  
 round it.

Æt. 44. But Colman saw nothing of this, wonderful to say. No laughter, or too much laughter, seemed to be all one to him. He was not to be moved.\* He had the manuscript of the comedy in his hands for many months, and could not determine to say *yes* or *no*.

"but often repeated to me in her advanced age, was that he was a strong republican in principle, and would have been (for she, God bless her, was a strong tory) a very dangerous writer if he had lived to the times of the French Revolution. I remember one story now" (*I doubt if quite original*) "which she used to tell of a manifest victory that Goldsmith once had over her father, who chose, at one time, to speak in high terms of M, a very bad actor, whom Garrick advised to leave the stage. Lord Nugent was one evening very eloquent to Goldsmith in praise of M. 'But, my lord,' said Goldsmith, 'you must allow he treads the stage very ill—he waddles.' 'Waddles?' said Lord Nugent, 'yes, he waddles like a goose—why you know we call him Goose M.' 'Well, and then, you know, when he endeavours to express strong passion, he bellows.' 'Bellows?' said Lord Nugent, 'to be sure he does—bellows like a bull.' 'Why, we call him Bull M.' 'Well, and then,' continued Goldsmith, pursuing his triumph, 'his voice breaks, and he croaks.' 'Croaks?' said Lord Nugent, 'why the fellow croaks like a frog. We call him Frog M. But M. is a good actor.' 'Why, yes,' said Goldsmith, 'barring the goose, and the bull, and the frog, and a few other things I could mention, and not wishing to speak ill of my neighbours, I will allow M. is a good actor.' The other story she used to tell of Goldsmith, in which he had certainly the advantage of her, was of his revenge upon her for having, one evening at Gosfield, tied the tail of his wig, whilst he was asleep, to the back of his chair. When he woke, and his wig came off, he, knowing at once who was the practical joker of the family, threatened to revenge himself upon her. He was then writing *She Stoops to Conquer*—and his revenge was to make Tony Lumpkin the hero in precisely the same trick. Except the old story of his having said to Lord Shelburne, 'I wonder why people call your lordship Malagrida, for Malagrida was a very honest man,' which she used always to crow over as being so like him, I remember only what he wrote, by way of an amends to her for having immortalised her in Tony Lumpkin, as a riddle on her name.

"The clothes we love best, and the half of an agent,

*Is* the name of a Lady, to whom I'm obadient.

"Now there is not much to help in a second edition of such a biography—but it is my little all." The doggerel riddle, I may add, is not the only example of that kind of literature attributed to Goldsmith. His cousin Mrs. Lawder believed him to have written the subjoined on the name of his friend Newbery.

"What we say of a thing which is just come in fashion,  
 And that which we do with the dead,  
 Is the name of the honestest man in the nation:  
 What more of a man can be said?"



Poor Goldsmith's early dream that poets were to find protection in the Covent-garden manager, had been doomed to have dire awakening. He was impelled at last to lay all his circumstances before him, to describe of what vital moment to its writer the acting of this comedy had become, and to make appeal from the manager's judgment to the mercy of the friend. But to oven this he received a general and still evasive answer; reiterating but not specifying objections, and hinting the necessity of counsel with other advisers. Thus the matter stood in the middle of January 1773, when Goldsmith, with a galling sense that the best part of the season was passing, wrote with renewed earnestness to Colman.

1772.  
Æt. 44.

1773.  
Æt. 45.

"DEAR SIR, *I entreat* you'll relieve me from that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever objections you have made or shall make to my play I will endeavour to remove and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges either of its merit or faults I can never submit to. Upon a former occasion when my other play was before Mr. Garrick he offered to bring me before Mr. Whitehead's tribunal, but I refused the proposal with indignation: I hope I shall not experience as hard treatment from you as from him. I have as you know a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play I can readily satisfy my creditor that way, at any rate I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God's sake take the play and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least which you have given as bad plays as mine. I am your friend and servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."\*

In answer to this, the manuscript was at last returned with many distasteful remarks written in upon the blank leaves, though with an accompanying assurance that the promise of the theatre should be kept, and the comedy acted notwithstanding; but, smarting from vexation at Colman's criticism, though now with a dreary misgiving of as ill success at Drury-lane, Goldsmith sent his manuscript a few days later, as he received it, to Garrick. He had hardly done so when he recalled it as hastily. With no fresh cause for distrust of Garrick, it would seem; but because Johnson had interfered, had pointed out the disadvantage to the play in any formal withdrawal from Covent-garden, and had himself gone to talk to Colman about it. This letter to Garrick (endorsed in the actor's handwriting "Dr. Goldsmith about his play") was written on the 6th of February.

\* Colman's *Posthumous Letters* (4to. 1820), 180-1.



"DEAR SIR, I ask you many pardons for the trouble I gave you of yesterday. Upon more mature deliberation, and the advice of a sensible friend, I began to think it indelicate in me to throw upon you the odium of confirming Mr. Colman's 1773. sentence. I therefore request you will send my play by my servant back; for *Æt. 45.* having been assured of having it acted at the other house, though I confess yours in every respect more to my wish, yet it would be folly in me to forego an advantage which lies in my power of appealing from Mr. Colman's opinion to the judgment of the town. I entreat if not too late you will keep this affair a secret for sometime. I am, dear Sir, your very humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH." \*

Johnson described the spirit of his interview with Colman many years later, when, talking of the steep and thorny road through which his friend Goldsmith had had to make his way to fame, he reminded Reynolds that both his comedies had been once refused, "his first by Garrick, his second by Colman, *who was prevailed on* "at last by much solicitation, nay, a kind of force, to bring it on;" † to which Reynolds replied with a striking illustration of the strange crotchets of judgment in such things, to the effect that Burke could see no merit in the *Beggars' Opera*. But in behalf of the new comedy, it is certain, the three distinguished friends were in hearty agreement: and it is from one of Johnson's letters to Boswell, on the 22nd of February, that we learn it is at last about to be performed. "Doctor Goldsmith has a new comedy, which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This, you see, borders upon farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable." ‡ But though Colman had consented, it was with reservation of his original opinion. "Doctor Goldsmith," wrote Johnson ten days later to an American divine (White, afterwards bishop of Pennsylvania), "has a new comedy in rehearsal at Covent-garden, to which the manager predicts ill success. I hope he will be mistaken. I think it deserves a very kind reception."

\* *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 527. This letter clearly disproves what Walpole says of the comedy in his correspondence with Mason (i. 78). "Garrick would not act it, but bought himself off by a poor prologue."

† See *ante*, i. 362.

‡ *Boswell*, iii. 243-4.

‡ *Boswell*, iii. 241.

Its chances of a kind reception had received strong reinforcement not many days before. It had been some time noised about that Foote had a novelty in preparation at the Haymarket, founded on the Panton-street puppets, and the town was all on tip-toe to welcome it. "Will your figures be as large as life, Mr. Foote?" asked a titled dame. "Oh no, my lady," said Foote, "not much 'larger than Garrick.'" The night of *The Primitive Puppet Show*, the 15th of February, arrived; the whole length of the Haymarket was crammed with carriages; such was the impatience of the less fashionable crowd in waiting, that the doors were burst open from without; and, to an audience breathless with expected merriment, Foote in due time presented himself. He had to offer them on that occasion, he said, a comedy called the *Handsome Housemaid, or Piety in Pattens*; which was to illustrate how a maiden of low degree, by the mere effects of morality and virtue, raised herself to riches and honours. But they would not, he added, discover much wit or humour in it, because, agreeing with the most fashionable of his brother writers that any signs of joyful satisfaction were beneath the dignity of such an assembly as he saw before him (roars of laughter interrupted him here), he had given up the sensual for the sentimental style. As for the mode of representing such a style by means of puppets, he sheltered himself behind the examples of the early Greek and Roman theatres, "of which he 'gave a most luminous and faithful historical picture.'\*" The *Puppet Show* proceeded, and sentimental comedy never recovered the shock of that night.† Garrick set himself at once to laugh at

\* Bee's *Essay* prefixed to Foote's *Works*, i. cxxxvi.

† I ought nevertheless so far to modify the statement in the text as to add that it found itself able again to make a brief stand, two years later, against the truth and humour of Sheridan's *Rivals*. I quote from the intelligent and amusing *Recollections* of Mr. Bernard his account of the first night's performance of that delightful comedy. "*The Rivals*, in my opinion, was a decided attempt to follow up the flow 'which Goldsmith had given in *She Stoops to Conquer*. My recollection of the manner in which the former was received, bears me out in the supposition. The audience were composed of two parties,—those who supported the prevailing taste, and those who were indifferent to it, and liked nature: on the first night of a new play it was very natural that the former should predominate, and what was the consequence? Why, that Faulkland and Julia (which Sheridan had obviously

it, as loudly as though he never had supported it; \* and to that end sent Goldsmith a very humorous prologue descriptive of its unhappy fate, a tribute to the better prospects of his *unsentimental* comedy.

1773.  
Æt. 45.

Not yet in the theatre itself, however, were these felt or understood. Mortification still attended Goldsmith there. The actors and actresses had taken their tone from the manager. Gentleman Smith threw up Young Marlow; Woodward refused Tony Lumpkin; Mrs. Abington† (and this was the greatest blow of all) declined Miss Hardcastle; and, in the teeth of his own misgivings, Colman could not contest with theirs. So alarming was the defection, to some of Goldsmith's friends, that they urged the postponement of the comedy. "No," he said, giving to his necessity the braver look of independence, "I'd rather my play were damned by bad players, than merely saved by good acting." Tony was cast to Quick, the actor who had played the trifling part of the Postboy in his first comedy; and Shuter, still true to the cause of humour and character which he admirably supported in Mr. Hardcastle, suggested Lewes for Young Marlow. He was afterwards better known as *Lee* Lewes, to distinguish him from the exquisite light comedian, Lewis, whom Cumberland had just discovered at Dublin, and was writing about, in a capital critical style,‡ to

"introduced to conciliate the sentimentalists, but which in the present day are considered heavy incumbrances) were the characters most favourably received, whilst "Sir Anthony Absolute, Bob Acres, and Lydia, those faithful and diversified pictures of life, were barely tolerated; and Malaprop (as she deserved to be) was singled out for peculiar vengeance." 142.

\* Walpole lets us into the secret of this. "Garriek, by the negociation of a secretary of state, has made peace with Foote, and by the secret article of the treaty is to be left out of the puppet-show." *Letters to Lady Ossory*, i. 52, Feb. 11, 1773.

† She was a great favourite with the club, and poor Goldsmith's mortification was all the greater for having freely talked in Gerrard-street of the part he had written "on purpose for Mrs. Abington." Northcote's *Reynolds*, i. 128. In the year after Goldsmith's death Reynolds took "forty places" in the boxes at her benefit, having promised to support her with "a body of wits." See *Boswell*, v. 162.

‡ How admirably in a couple of lines does Cumberland at once describe what the best critics who talked about Lewis when his fame was at its height appear to make the leading characteristic of his delightful comedy. "I am firmly of opinion, the "lad has faculties to make a figure in comedy; and not in Mr. King's or Dodd's walk "only, but as the fine gentleman; as that higher kind of comedy which hardly now



Garrick, but who subsequently appeared at Covent-garden. Lewes was the harlequin of the theatre ; but on Shuter protesting in his vehement odd way that " the boy could patter and use the "gob-box as quick and smart as any of them," Goldsmith <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> consented to the trial ; and before the second rehearsal was over, felt sure he would succeed.\* Famous was the company at those rehearsals. Poor Shuter quite lost his presence of mind, and quaint talkativeness, at the appearance of so many ladies.† Johnson attended them ; Reynolds, his sister, and the whole Horneck party ; Cradock, Murphy, and Colman. But not a jot of the manager's ominous and evil prediction could all the hopeful mirth of the rest abate. He had set his face against success. He would not suffer a new scene to be painted for the play, he refused to furnish even a new dress, and was careful to spread his fore-

"exists, which Smith has in the interior, and to which O'Brien might perhaps have "attained if he had not meddled with real instead of artificial life. He has a strong "tone, which breaks occasionally into the humourous with great success, and is "capable of variation in the cadences ; his eye is quick, and his modesty does not "stand in the way." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 430. "The strong tone breaking "occasionally into the humourous," admirably depicts a style of comedy now, alas ! extinct. I take advantage of the mention of O'Brien for the last time to quote a letter of his (from Colman's *Post. Letters*, 173-6), not less admirable than Cumberland's for its shrewd sense in the matter of theatrical criticism. He is writing about his clever little drama of *Cross Purposes* to manager Colman, and is in great anxiety about the cast, and the actors. "Mrs. Green," he says, should be dressed vulgarly "and ridiculously genteel ; in my opinion the ladies on the stage don't sufficiently "consider the truth of character in that respect. The Housemaid you will give to "anybody you think can be naïve and simple enough to say her little with the "insignificant manner that belongs to it." That is very well said. I may add that O'Brien, since his return from America, appears to have conciliated his great relations a little. This is the conclusion of his letter to Colman : "I am sure I shall be in "such a fidget I shall not be able to resist coming to see my fate. I can easily go "from your house into some of the boxes without being noticed. Beside chusing to "avoid the *dicier hic est* in case of a disappointment, I am afraid of giving offence "to my best friend Lady Ilchester, who is the best woman in the world, but very "religions and prejudiced in many particulars."

\* *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 173. "Goldsmith," says Cooke, "at first agreed with some "reluctance ; but after one or two rehearsals so altered his opinion, that he declared "it was the second best performance in the piece, and this opinion was afterwards "confirmed by the general sense of the audience."

† "When Shuter appeared before a crowded house, he always felt himself perfectly easy ; yet when he appeared before this small and select audience, he "betrayed the strongest marks of shyness, even to bashfulness." Northcote's *Reynolds*, i. 287.



'bodings as widely as he could. Colman was certainly not a false or ill-natured man; but he appears very sincerely though quite unaccountably to have despaired of the comedy from the <sup>1773.</sup> first, and to have thought it a kind of mercy to help it out <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> of, rather than into, the world.

With a manager so disposed, at almost every step taken within the theatre there was of course a stumble. Murphy volunteered an epilogue, but the lady who was not to speak it made objection to the lady who was; the author wrote an epilogue to bring in both, and the lady first objected-to objected in her turn; a third epilogue was then written by poor Goldsmith, to which Colman himself thought proper to object as too bad to be spoken; Cradock meanwhile sent a fourth from the country, rejected for a similar reason (but politely printed with the comedy as having "arrived too late"); and Goldsmith finally tried his hand at a fifth, which, though permitted to be spoken, he thought "a mawkish thing." The history of these petty annoyances would be incredible, but that Mr. Cradock has preserved a letter in which Goldsmith describes them; and the epilogues, collected with his poems, survive to attest its truth. The letter was written immediately after the performance, but will most properly be quoted here.

"MY DEAR SIR, The play has met with a success much beyond your expectations or mine. I thank you sincerely for your Epilogue, which however could not be used, but with your permission shall be printed. The story in short is this. Murphy sent me rather the outline of an Epilogue than an Epilogue, which was to be sung by Miss Catley, and which she approved. Mrs. Bulkley hearing this, insisted on throwing up her part" (Miss Harcastle) "unless, according to the custom of the theatre, she were permitted to speak the Epilogue. In this embarrassment I thought of making a quarrelling Epilogue between Catley and her, debating *who* should speak the Epilogue; but then Mrs. Catley refused, after I had taken the trouble of drawing it out. I was then at a loss indeed; an Epilogue was to be made, and for none but Mrs. Bulkley. I made one, and Colman thought it too bad to be spoken; \* I

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\* This epilogue, "too bad to be spoken," is the epilogue printed in Mr. Murray's edition (1837) of the *Miscellaneous Works* as "intended for Mrs. Bulkley," though the editor (iv. 137) had been quite unable to ascertain "for what play it was intended;" just as Percy and Steevens had racked their brains to discover it, and

was obliged therefore to try a fourth time, and I made a very mawkish thing, as you'll shortly see. Such is the history of my Stage adventures, and which I have at last done with. I cannot help saying, that I am very sick of the stage; and though I believe I shall get three tolerable benefits, yet I shall on the whole be a loser, even in a pecuniary light; my ease and comfort I certainly lost while it was in agitation. I am, my dear Cradock, your obliged and obedient servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. P.S. Present my most humble respects to Mrs. Cradock." \* 1773.  
Æt. 45.

This anticipates a little; seeing that some touches to the loss of ease and comfort are yet to be added. There were but a few days left before the comedy was to be acted, and no name had been found for it. "We are all in labour," says Johnson, whose labour of kindness had been untiring throughout, "for a name to 'Goldy's play.'"<sup>†</sup> What now stands as the second title, *The Mistakes of a Night*, was originally the only one; but it was thought undignified for a comedy. *The Old House a New Inn* was suggested in place of it, but dismissed as awkward. Reynolds then

with as little success. Plainly it was meant for the successor to the *Good-natured Man*.

"No high-life scenes, no sentiment;—the creature  
Still stoops among the low to copy nature."

The mere resemblance of some of the lines to those in the adopted and "very mawkish" epilogue,—indeed it seems originally to have contained four lines which the latter repeated, and which no doubt for that reason Percy erased before printing it (Nichols's *Illustrations*, vii. 31),—is in itself sufficient to prove the identity of purpose for which both were written. Percy, who received it from Goldsmith among the papers meant to illustrate his biography, but who had not the letter of Cradock to assist the moderate amount of care or consideration which he seems to have bestowed on any of them, entertained the same doubt as the editor of the *Miscellaneous Works* (not Mr. Prior, though his name is on the title-page, but the late Mr. Thomas Wright), and wrote to ask Steevens to solve it by personal inquiry of Mrs. Bulkeley herself. But one-and-twenty years had at that time passed since *She Stoops to Conquer* was played, the once pretty and fascinating actress had been seven years dead, and Steevens, who professed a reluctance to go into the other world to make the necessary inquiries, contented himself with sending the bishop a few hints for any one who might not have the same objection. "I would not advise him to 'present himself at Lucretia's rout or Penelope's tea-table, in the hope of meeting 'Mrs. Bulkeley at either of these places. It is more probable he will find her in 'private conference with Jocasta, the mother and wife of Œdipus; for it is well 'known that our fair epilogue-speaker was kept by a player, and seduced his son to 'her bed.' For this conduct she was repeatedly hissed, and compelled, during 'several seasons, to withdraw from the stage. . . . The captain of a trading vessel 'was afterwards fool enough to marry her, and in his possession she died. In short, 'but one out of all the actresses who figured in Goldsmith's comedies is now alive.'" Nichols's *Illustrations*, vii. 32.

\* Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 226.

† See *ante*, 103

announced what he thought so capital a title, that he threatened, if it were not adopted, he should go and help to damn the play; and

he triumphantly named it *The Belle's Stratagem*.<sup>\*</sup> This name  
<sup>1773.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 45.</sup> was still under discussion, and had well-nigh been snatched from Mrs. Cowley, when Goldsmith, in whose ear perhaps a line of Dryden's lingered, hit upon *She Stoops to Conquer*.<sup>†</sup> "Stoops, indeed?" was Horace Walpole's comment. "So she does! that is, the Muse; she is dragged up to the knees, and has trudged, I believe, from Southwark Fair." <sup>‡</sup> No wonder was it, surely, that those indisputably fine ladies of the theatre should object to hold up such homely and miry petticoats; nor was the poor author without graver troubles which he could not remedy, and he left the last rehearsal with a heavy heart. His probable failure had been made matter of such common gossip, that it was even announced in the box-office to the servant who was engaging a box for the Duke of Gloucester; and a very angry remonstrance with Colman followed. Up to this time Goldsmith had not been able to muster courage to begin the printing of his play; but in a kind of desperation he now went to Newbery, and, in redemption of the debt between them which had lately cost him some anxiety, offered him the chances of the copyright. "And yet to tell you the truth," he added, "there are great doubts of its success." Newbery thought it best to accept the offer, by which he afterwards very largely profited.

The eventful day arrived (Monday the 15th of March), and

<sup>\*</sup> Northcote's *Life*, i. 285.

<sup>†</sup> The Rev. Mr. Mitford suggested to me that the title may have been originated by Dryden's,

"But kneels to conquer, and but stoops to rise."

<sup>‡</sup> The Muse, that is, whose high priest at this time (in the same fastidious opinion) was another living poet so great, so sublime, that twenty tragic authors might be set up with his rejected lines alone. In other words (I named him ten pages back but the name will already have been forgotten) his friend Mr. Jephson. To such extent indeed did his prejudices warp an otherwise keen and penetrating judgment, that, even in his carefully written *Memoirs of the Reign of George the Third*, where the first place in poetry is given to Goldsmith, and in history the first is assigned to Robertson, these opinions are rendered worthless by his coupling, in the same sentences, "Doctor Goldsmith and Mr. Anstey," and "Doctor Robertson and Mrs. Macauley." See the chapter on the Literature of the Early part of the Reign of George the Third, iii. 172 and 176.

Goldsmith's friends were summoned to a tavern dinner, arranged and to be presided over by Johnson. George Steevens was one; and, in calling on his way to the tavern to take up the old zealous philosopher, found him ready dressed, "but in coloured <sup>1773.</sup>  
"clothes." There was a court-mourning at the time, for the <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> King of Sardinia; and, being reminded of this by Steevens, and that he would find every one else in black, Johnson hastened with reiterated thanks to change his dress, profuse in his gratitude for being saved from an appearance so improper in the "front row of "a front box," and protesting that he would not "for ten pounds "have seemed so retrograde to any general observance." \* At this dinner, besides Johnson and Steevens, Burke and his brother Richard were present, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Caleb Whitefoord, and (he would himself have us believe) Cumberland and a party of Scotch friends. But, for the presence of Cumberland and his friends, his own *Memoirs*, little better than an amusing collection of apocryphal things, is the only authority: and not only has he described a jumble of a party that could never have assembled (putting in poor Fitzherbert as a guest, though he had already destroyed himself), but, in giving everybody a ludicrous air of patronising superiority to Goldsmith, and declaring their only desire to have been to obtain a triumph "not only over Colman's judgment but their own," he has so unblushingly mis-stated the known opinions of Johnson and the rest in connection with the play, that his whole scene proclaims itself romance. It is a Sir Fretful good-humouredly describing the success of a brother dramatist.

He says that he and his friends had little hope of success, but were perfectly determined to struggle hard for their author; that they assembled their strength at the Shakespeare-tavern (it is much more likely to have been the St. James's coffee-house), where Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, "and was the

\* Steevens's communication to *Boswell*, viii. 327. I may take this opportunity of subjoining Mrs. Thrale's experience of Johnson in a theatre. "He was," she says (*Anecdotes*, 72), "for the most part an exceedingly bad playhouse companion, as his "person drew people's eyes upon the box, and the loudness of his voice made it difficult for me to hear anybody but himself."



"life and soul of the corps"; that though his own jokes, and his raillery of Goldsmith, were a better comedy, and much more attractive, than that which awaited them, they started in good time <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Alt. 45.</sub> for their duty at the theatre, taking with them a band of determined North British *claqueurs*; that they distributed themselves at separate and allotted posts, with preconcerted signals for applause, elaborately communicating each with the other; that his own station was as flapper to a simple Scotch worthy with a most contagious roar of a laugh, but with no notion how to use it, who, from laughing upon signal where he found no joke, proceeded to find a joke and a roar on his own account in almost everything said; and that, though these mal-à-propos bursts of friendly thunder gave umbrage now and then to the pit, the success of (not the comedy, but) "our manœuvres" was complete, and the curtain fell to a triumph.\*

Alas! while Cumberland, writing more than thirty years after the event, would have us thus believe that hardly anybody was laughing but himself and friends, the papers of the day report him to have been seen as manifestly miserable in one box, as Hugh Kelly† and

\* Cumberland's *Memoirs*, i. 366-9. Apart from its truth or falsehood, what is said of the Scotchman with a genius for a roar is sufficiently good to be quoted. If he had survived to correct his friend's memory he would probably have told us that he did honestly roar all through the comedy, not because he was told to do it, but because he found himself unable to do anything else. "We had among us a very "worthy and efficient member . . . gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the "same time the most contagious, laugh that ever echoed from the human lungs. "The neighing of the horse of the son of Hystaspes was a whisper to it; the whole "thunder of the theatre could not drown it. . . All eyes were upon Johnson, who sat "in a front row of a side box; and when he laughed, everybody thought themselves "warranted to roar. . . But my friend followed signals with a rattle so irresistibly "comic, that, when he had repeated it several times, the attention of the spectators "was so engrossed by his person and performances, that the progress of the play "seemed likely to become a secondary object, and I found it prudent to insinuate "that he might halt his music without any prejudice to the author; but alas! it "was now too late to rein him in; he had laughed upon my signal where he found "no joke, and now, unluckily, he fancied that he found a joke in almost everything "that was said, so that nothing in nature could be more mal-à-propos than some of "his bursts every now and then were."

† I may make room for one of the many epigrams which coupled him with Kelly.

"At Dr. Goldsmith's merry play,  
All the spectators laugh, they say.  
The assertion, sir, I must deny,  
For Cumberland and Kelly cry."

*Ossian* Macpherson showed themselves in another: not only when Woodward came on, in mourning, to speak Garrick's satirical prologue against the sentimentalists, but also while the laughter, as the comedy went on, seemed to peal the death-knell of their school; and particularly when one hearty shout went up for <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> Tony's friend at the Jolly Pigeons, the bear-leader who never danced his bear but to the very genteelest of tunes, *Water Parted* or the *Minuet in Ariadne*. Northcote was present, and wrote to his brother that "quite the reverse to everybody's expectation, it was received "with the utmost applause." Mr. Day was present, and also gives the weight of his judicial authority against Cumberland. He says that he and some friends, knowing the adverse expectations entertained of the comedy, had assembled in great force in the pit to protect it; but they found no difficulty to encounter, for it was "received throughout with the greatest acclamations." Indeed all the probabilities are against Cumberland's account (even Horace Walpole writes to Lady Ossory from Arlington-street, the morning after, "There was a new play by Dr. Goldsmith last night, which "succeeded prodigiously");" \* and only one sentence in it, confirmed by every other authority, can be pronounced not questionable. "All eyes were upon Johnson," he says, "who sat in a front row "in a side box; and when he laughed, everybody thought himself "warranted to roar."

\* Vernon Smith's *Ossory Letters*, i. 57. March 16, 1773. Walpole does not appear to have been present himself till a few nights later, but he had no doubt heard of the night's performance from Beauclerc or some other friend as little likely to overrate the success. I may quote also, as a most unexceptionable witness to the mere reception of the comedy, the *Monthly Review* (xlviii. 309), which says, in its notice of the published play, that Shuter, Quick, and indeed all the performers, had topped their parts in the representation, and made the house, the upper regions especially, very merry. And as Griffiths had formerly explained the enthusiasm and the coldness with which *False Delicacy* and *The Good-natured Man* had been respectively greeted, by an opinion that sentimental comedy should be seen, and humorous comedy read, because the stage always tended to turn comic breadth into mere vulgarity, the sapient and consistent critic now coolly reverses his rule to account for poor Goldsmith's success. "Doctor Goldsmith's merit is in that sort of dialogue "which lies on a level with the most common understandings; and in that low "mischief and mirth which we laugh at, while we are ready to despise ourselves for "so doing. This is the reason why the reader must peruse the present comedy without pleasure, while the representation of it may make him laugh."

Goldsmith had not come with his friends to the theatre. During the dinner, as Sir Joshua afterwards told Northcote, not only did he hardly speak a word, but was so choked that he could not swallow a mouthful;\* and when the party left for the theatre, he went an opposite way. A friend found him sauntering between seven and eight o'clock in the Mall of St. James's Park: struggling to be brave, it may be, with the reflection of what an illustrious line of Ben Jonsons, Websters, Fletchers, Dekkers, Drydens, Congroves, and Fieldings, are comprised in the company of "stage-damned:" and it was only on this friend's earnest representation of how useful his presence might be, should sudden alteration be found necessary in any scene, that he was prevailed upon to go to the theatre. He entered the stage-door at the opening of the fifth act, and heard a solitary hiss at the improbability of Mrs. Hardecastle, in her own garden, supposing herself forty miles off on Crackscull-common (a trick, nevertheless, which Sheridan actually played off on Madame de Genlis). "What's that?" he cried out, alarmed not a little at the sound. "Psha! Doctor," said Colman, who was standing at the side-scene, doubtless well pleased to have even so much sanction for all his original forebodings: "don't be afraid of "a squib, when we have been sitting these two hours on a barrel "of gunpowder." Cooke, who gives the best version of this anecdote, corrects assertions elsewhere made that it had happened at the last rehearsal; tells us that Goldsmith himself had related it to him; and adds that "he never forgave it to Colman to the "last hour of his life." † To all the actors his gratitude was profuse. So thankful had the Tony Lumpkin, in making Quick's fortune, made him, that he altered a translation of Sedley's from Brueys's comedy of *Le Grondeur*, adapted it as a farce (which Thomas Moore, who saw the French original fifty years later at the Français, says it already was, and a wretchedly dull one), ‡ and

\* Goldsmith's mouth became so parched and dry, "from the agitation of his mind, "that he was unable to swallow a single mouthful." Northcote's *Reynolds*, i. 286. Northcote repeats the same thing in his *Conversations*, 41.

† *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 173.

‡ *Diary*, iv. 14. This may be some excuse for Goldsmith having turned it into an

suffered it to be played with his name for the benefit of Quick, before the season closed; and so pleased was he with the exertions of Lee Lewes, that on the occasion of *his* benefit, on the night preceding Quick's, he wrote him an occasional epilogue in <sup>1773.</sup>  
his pleasantest vein. <sub>Æt. 45.</sub>

The hiss seems to have been really a solitary one; for no difference is to be found in any reliable account, either public or private, as to the comedy's absolute success, and the extraordinary "acclamations" that rang through the theatre "when it was given out for the author's benefit." Indeed the hiss was so notably exceptional, that one paper gives it to Cumberland, another to Kelly, and a third, in a parody on *Ossian*,\* to Macpherson, who had strong reason for hostility to all the Johnson "clique." It became the manager's turn to be *afraid of squibs*; for never with more galling effect had they played round any poor mortal's head than now, for some weeks to come, they rattled round that of Colman.† Even Wilkes left his graver brawls to

afterpiece, though not for having failed to improve its dulness. He ought not to have meddled with it. A specimen scene of Goldsmith's adaptation is printed in *Miscell. Works*, iv. 333-342, from the licenser's MS. copy in the possession of Mr. Payne Collier.

\* "Dumb the sullen sat . . till at last burst faintly a timorous hiss . . turn him out, toss him over, was the voice of the crowd . . the manager grumbled within . . the people sat laughing amain."

† A few smartish verses will show the character of these attacks:

"Come, Coley, doff those mourning weeds,  
Nor thus with jokes be flamm'd:  
Tho' Goldsmith's present play succeeds,  
His next may still be damn'd.  
As this has 'scaped without a fall,  
To sink his next prepare;  
New actors hire from Wapping Wall,  
And dresses from Rag Fair.  
For scenes let tatter'd blankets fly,  
The prologue Kelly write;  
Then swear again the piece must die  
Before the author's night.  
Should these tricks fail, the lucky elf  
To bring to lasting shame,  
E'en write the best you can yourself,  
And print it in his name."



try his hand at them. The sentimentalist leaders were hit heavily on all sides; but the evil-boding manager, to use his own expression, was put upon the rack. He ran away to Bath to escape the <sup>1773.</sup> torture, but it followed him even there, and he had at last <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> to ask Goldsmith himself to intercede for mercy. "Colman "is so distressed with abuse," writes Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, "that "he has solicited Goldsmith to take him off the rack of the news- "papers."\* Johnson's subsequent judgment of the comedy need hardly be quoted. "I know of no comedy for many years that has "so much exhilarated an audience; that has answered so much "the great end of comedy, making an audience merry."† When in the theatre, even Horace Walpole, though he must have winced a little at the laugh raised in the course of the performance at an old lady friend of his, and a club of which they both were members,‡ found himself obliged to admit that some of the characters were well acted, and that Garrick's "poor epilogue" was admirably spoken by Woodward; and, in short, he has to justify his general ill opinion of the piece by remarking that a play may make you laugh very much indeed, and yet be a very wretched comedy. § Goldsmith was not indisposed, nevertheless, to be quite contented with that test. "Did it make you laugh?" he

\* *Mrs. Piozzi's Letters*, i. 80. It was not till six years after poor Goldsmith was in his grave that Colman thought of offering a sort of public apology for the rack on which he had himself placed Goldsmith. These lines occur in his prologue to the *Chapter of Accidents*:

"When Fielding, Humour's favourite child, appear'd,  
Low was the word—a word each author fear'd;  
Till, cheer'd at length by Pleasantry's bright ray,  
Nature and Mirth resumed their lawful sway,  
And Goldsmith's genius bask'd in open day!"

† *Boswell*, iii. 276.

‡ The "Albemarle Street Club;" to which Young Marlow represents himself playing the agreeable Rattle, and keeping it up with Mrs. Mantrap and old Miss Biddy Buckskin till three in the morning. "I forgot to tell your ladyship," writes Walpole to Lady Ossory, "that Miss Lloyd is in the new play by the name of Rachael Buckskin, though he has altered it in the printed copies. Somebody wrote for her a "very sensible reproof to him, only it ended with an indecent *grossièreté*. However, "the fool took it seriously, and wrote a most dull and scurrilous answer; but, "luckily for him, Mr. Beauclerc and Mr. Garrick intercepted it." Walpole's *Ossory Letters*, i. 60.

asked Northcote, who had applauded lustily in the gallery in company with Ralph, Sir Joshua's confidential man;\* but who was too modest to offer an opinion of his own, when asked next day. "Exceedingly," was the answer. "Then that is all <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub>" "I require;"† and the author promised him half-a-dozen tickets for his first benefit night.

This night, and its two successors,‡ are supposed to have realised between four and five hundred pounds; and the comedy ran to the end of the season, with only such interruptions as holidays and benefit nights interposed. The tenth night was by royal command, and the twelfth was the season's closing night, on the 31st of May. But Foote acted it in the summer at the Hay-market, and it was resumed in winter with the re-opening of Covent-garden. Again it had the compliment of a royal command; ran many merry nights that second season; has made thousands of honest people merry, every season since; and still continues to add its yearly sum to the harmless stock of public pleasure. Goldsmith had meanwhile printed it with all despatch, and dedicated it to Johnson. "In inscribing this slight performance to you," he said, "I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety."§ Goldsmith's dedications are perfect models of what that kind of writing should be.

\* "A party went from Sir Joshua's to support it. The present title was not fixed upon till that morning. Northcote went with Ralph, Sir Joshua's man, into the gallery, to see how it went off; and after the second act there was no doubt of its success." Northcote's *Conversations*, 41. In a subsequent passage (196), he says that a gross expression fell from one of the actors, which "the gallery" promptly suppressed.

† *Life of Reynolds*, i. 286.

‡ To author's nights (or days) Pope alludes in a celebrated passage:

"Here she beholds the chaos dark and deep  
Where nameless somethings in their causes sleep,  
Till genial Jacob, or a warm third day,  
Call forth each mass, a poem or a play."

*Dunciad*, i. 55-60.

§ Boswell is good enough to remark on this: "Goldsmith, though his vanity often

"excited him to occasional competition, had a very high regard for Johnson, which he at this time expressed in the strongest manner in the dedication of his comedy."

In quitting the comedy, let me add another sort of tribute which its success brought upon him. Percy found the subjoined among poor Goldsmith's papers after his death; and that Mrs. John Oakman received an answer perfectly satisfactory, and, in Mr. Oakman's view, creditable to his "good sense," I cannot entertain a doubt. It is entitled "On Dr. Goldsmith's comedy *She Stoops to Conquer*."

"Quite sick in her bed Thalia was laid,  
A sentiment puke had quite kill'd the sweet maid,  
Her bright eyes lost all of their fire:  
When a regular Doctor, one Goldsmith by name,  
Found out her disorder as soon as he came,  
And has made her (for ever 'twill crown all his fame)  
As lively as one can desire.

"Oh! Doctor, assist a poor bard who lies ill,  
Without e'er a nurse, e'er a potion, or pill;  
From your kindness he hopes for some ease.  
You're a Good Natur'd Man all the world does allow,  
O would your good nature but shine forth just now,  
In a manner—I'm sure your good sense will tell how,  
Your servant most humbly 'twould please.

"The bearer is the author's wife, and an answer from Dr. Goldsmith by her will be ever gratefully acknowledged by his Humble Servant, JOHN OAKMAN. Orange-court, Swallow-street, Carnaby-market. Saturday, March 27, 1773."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE SHADOW AND THE SUNSHINE.

1773.

ONE dark shadow fell upon Goldsmith in the midst of the success of *She Stoops to Conquer*, and it came as usual from Kenrick. Nine days after the appearance of the comedy, a personal attack by that professional libeller appeared in an <sup>1773.</sup> evening paper called the *London Packet*.<sup>Æt. 45.</sup>\* It was not more

\* Percy thought this worth preserving in a note to the first *Memoir* (103-5), and it may therefore perhaps be best to retain it here, if only as a specimen of the vulgar trash with which every successful man may look to be pelted, from some quarter or other. It is addressed "To Dr. Goldsmith;" and has for its motto *Vous vous noyez par vanité*. Thus it runs: "SIR, The happy knack which you have learnt of puffing your own compositions provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines, not to discover the trick of literary humbug. But the gauze is so thin, that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the doctor's monkey face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity is as unpardonable as your personal; would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told that for hours the great Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque Oranhotan's figure in a pier-glass? Was but the lovely H—k as much enamoured, you would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain. But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in praise of Goldy! But what has he to be either proud or vain of? *The Traveller* is a flimsy poem, built upon false principles; principles diametrically opposite to liberty. What is the *Good-Natured Man* but a poor water-gruel dramatic dose? What is the *Deserted Village* but a pretty poem, of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius, or fire? And pray what may be the last *speaking pantomime*, so praised by the doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue? We are made to laugh at stale, dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humour; wherein every scene is unnatural, and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature, and of drama, viz. Two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, sleep, &c, and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover to the daughter; he talks with her for some hours, and, when he sees her again in a different



gross than former favours from the same hand had been. All his writings were denounced in it. The *Traveller* was "flimsy," the *Deserted Village* "without fancy or fire," the *Good-natured Man* "water-gruel," and *She Stoops to Conquer* "a speaking pantomime." Harmless abuse enough, and such as plays the shadow to all success; for even the libeller is compelled to admit that "it is now the *ton* to go and see" the comedy he so elaborately abuses. Swift's sign of a genius is, that the dunces are in confederacy against him; and there is always a large and active class of them in literature. To the end of the chapter, the Dryden will have his Shadwell, and the Pope his Dennis; and still the *signum fatale Minervæ* will be a signal for the *huic date*, the old cry of attack.\* "Give it him" is the sentence, if he shows signs of life in genius or learning; and the execution seldom fails. But a man who enters literature, enters it on this condition. He has to reflect that, sooner or later, he will be stamped for as much as he is worth; and meanwhile has to think

"dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The Squire, whom we are told is to be a fool, proves the most sensible being of the piece; and he makes out a whole act by bidding his mother lie close behind a bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he has come to cut their throats; and to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet, sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play, but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother, supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr. Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends it would be damned, I positively aver; and from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice, and it is now the *ton* to go and see it, though I never saw a person that either liked it or approved it, any more than the absurd plot of Mr. Home's tragedy of *Alonzo*. Mr. Goldsmith, correct your arrogance, reduce your vanity; and endeavour to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort; and, as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

'Brise le miroir infidèle

'Qui vous cache la vérité.'

"TOM TICKLE."

\* "Somebody produced a newspaper in which was a letter of stupid abuse of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of which Johnson himself came in for a share. 'Pray,' said he, 'let us have it read aloud from beginning to end;' which being done, he, with a ludicrous earnestness, and not directing his look to any particular person, called out, 'Are we alive after all this satire?'" Langton's collectanea in *Boswell*, vii. 376.

that probably his height, dimensions, and prowess might not be so well discerned, if less men than himself did not thus surround and waylay him at his starting. Without extenuation of the unjust assailant, so much is fairly to be said; without <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> in the least agitating the question whether a petty larceny or a petty libel be the more immoral, or whether it be the more criminal to filch a purse or a good name. Shakespeare has decided that. But the present libel in the *London Packet* went far beyond the bounds indicated; and to which allusion has only been made, that the incident now to be related may be judged correctly. Goldsmith had patiently suffered worse public abuse; and would doubtless here have suffered as patiently, if baser matter had not been introduced. But the libeller had invaded private life, and dragged in the *Jessamy Bride*. "Was but the 'lovely H——k as much enamoured, you would not sigh, my 'gentle swain, in vain." Having read this, he felt it was his duty to resent it. Captain Charles Horneck, the lady's brother, is said to have accompanied him to the office of the *London Packet*, but in ignorance of his precise intention.\*

Thomas Evans was the publisher (from a note found among his papers, Goldsmith at first seems to have thought him the editor); and must not be confounded with the worthy bookseller of the

\* This however could hardly be, if Cradock's statement is to be believed. "The Doctor unfortunately went to dine with the family in Westminster just after they had read this insulting article, and they were all most highly indignant at it. The Doctor agonised all dinner time; but as soon as possible afterwards he stole away, '&c. &c.'" The truth is, that the initials only (Captain H——) of the friend who accompanied Goldsmith, appeared afterwards in the papers, and they would equally express his countryman Captain Higgins (introduced into the *Haunch of Venison*); perhaps a more likely man than Captain Horneck to have been his companion in such a business. The account in the text, it is true, is from the relation of one who was present, but, being a mere apprentice at the time, he was doubtless unacquainted with the person of either captain, and must on this point have spoken from his impression of what the papers of the day reported. I cannot help thinking it a strong presumption against Captain Horneck's presence that Goldsmith's anger had been chiefly excited by the allusion to his sister. Boswell himself tells us that he was betrayed into the act of resentment because he thought it "impertinent to 'him and to a lady of his acquaintance." (iii. 247.) Since this note was written I find that Dr. M'Donnell had an impression that Captain Higgins was the man. See *Prior*, ii. 347.

same name, who first\* collected Goldsmith's writings. This other Thomas Evans was more eccentric than amiable. He had so violent a quarrel with one of his sons that he allowed him, a year and a half before his own death, literally to perish in the streets; he separated from his wife, because she sided with her son in that quarrel; and he would have disinherited his heirs if they had not buried him without coffin or shroud, and limited his funeral expenses to forty shillings.† His assistant at this time was a young man named Harris, whose name afterwards rivalled Newbery's in the affection of children, having succeeded to Francis Newbery's business, carried on as the firm of Carnan and Newbery in St. Paul's-churchyard. It was of him that Goldsmith and the Captain inquired whether Evans was at home; and he has described what followed. He called Evans from an adjoining room, and heard him thus addressed: "I have called in consequence of a "scurrilous attack in your paper upon me (my name is Goldsmith), "and an unwarrantable liberty taken with the name of a young "lady. As for myself I care little, but her name must not be "sporting with." Evans upon this declaring ignorance of the matter, saying he would speak to the editor, and stooping as though to look for the libel, Goldsmith struck him smartly with his cane across the back, crying out as he did so, "You know "well enough, you rascal, what I mean."‡ But Evans, being a strong sturdy man, returned the blow "with interest"; and in the sudden scuffle a lamp suspended overhead was broken, the combatants covered with the oil, and the undignified affray brought

\* In London. See *ante*, 137.

† Nichols's *Anecdotes*, iii. 721.

‡ "Among Goldsmith's papers," says the *Percy Memoir*, "has been found the following unfinished relation of the adventure, dictated to an amanuensis; for the poor Doctor's hand was too much bruised to hold a pen. 'As I find the public "have been informed by the newspapers of a slight fray which happened between "me and the editor of an evening paper; to prevent their being imposed upon, "the account is shortly this. A friend of mine came on Friday to inform me that "a paragraph was inserted against me in the *London Packet*, which I was in honour "bound to resent. I read the paper, and considered it in the same light as he did. "I went to the editor, and struck him with my cane on the back. A scuffle ensued—'" 105-106. On second thoughts Goldsmith had discreetly substituted for this narrative the more general statement to be presently quoted.

to a somewhat ludicrous pause. Then there stepped from the adjoining editorial room, which Evans had lately quitted, no less a person than Kenrick himself, who had certainly written the libel; and who is described to have "separated the parties <sup>1778.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> "and sent Goldsmith home in a coach," greatly disfigured, according to Cradock; the Captain who accompanied him standing transfixed with amazement. Evans subsequently indicted Goldsmith for the assault, but consented to a compromise on his paying fifty pounds to a Welsh charity.\*

But this money payment was the least of the fines exacted. All the papers abused the poor sensitive poet, even such as were ordinarily favourable to him; and all of them steadily turned aside from the real point in issue. At last he stated it himself; in an Address to the Public which was published in the *Daily Advertiser* of the 31st of March, and which is well worth subjoining. The abuse at which it was aimed had at this time grown to an intolerable height. The Mr. Snakes, whom Sheridan satirised a few years later, were spawning in abundance. "I am not employed "in the political line, but in private disputes," said one of them this year to Tommy Townshend, explaining why he had preferred entering into the service of the newspapers rather than into that of the ministers. Attacks upon private character were the most liberal existing source of newspaper income.

"Lest it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that in all my life I never wrote, or dictated, a single paragraph, letter, or essay in a newspaper, except a few moral essays, under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the *Ledger*, and a letter to which I signed my name, in the *St. James's Chronicle*. If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no hand in it.

"I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power. What concerns the public, most properly admits of a public discussion. But of late, the press has turned from defending public interest, to making inroads upon private life,

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\* Soon after Kenrick's death a friend of his wrote to the magazines (this was in 1788) denying that he had written the libel, attributing it to Captain Thompson (a statement in all respects improbable), and stating that Kenrick's subsequent interference arose simply from the fact of "passing by the house and seeing the disturbance."



from combating the strong, to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse, and the protector is become the tyrant of the people. In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution; the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear; till at last every rank of mankind shall be found to give up its benefits, content with security from its insults.

1773. *Æt.* 45. "How to put a stop to this licentiousness, by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unable to tell; all I could wish is, that as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults, which we receive before the public, by being more open, are the more distressing; by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress, we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as a guardian of the liberty of the press, and, as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."\*

Johnson called this a foolish thing well done. Boswell had come up for his London holiday two days after it appeared, and thought it so well done, that, knowing Johnson to have dictated arguments in Scotch appeals and other like matters for himself, he assumed Johnson to have done it. "Sir," said Johnson, "Doctor Goldsmith would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing as that, than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or to do anything else that denoted his imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it, as if I had seen him do it. Sir, had he shown it to any one friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has, indeed, done it very well; but it

\* *Daily Advertiser*, 31st March, 1773. "What an odd fellow he must be," writes Dr. Hoadly to Garrick, "who speaks against the liberty of the press while he pleads for it! He had better throw what inconsistent humour he has into a novel (as in *the Vicar of Wakefield*) than pretend to a theatrical turn, which he has not. . . I have not yet had a sight of his five-act farce (for such it must be, from the specimen in the papers) which seemed sadly writ, though capable of some fun in the action." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 506. From the tone of Garrick's friends in matters of this kind, it is not difficult to infer what his own habit of speaking was; but indeed everybody among his contemporaries thought himself privileged to talk in this way of Goldsmith. Hoadly, however, whose coarse manner of writing his private letters proclaims him the very model of a public sentimentalist, has soon to alvert with ill-concealed impatience to Garrick's change of tone in this matter. "I should be glad to know your present real opinion, &c. &c. You seem now to give in to Doctor Goldsmith's ridiculousness in opposition to all sentimentality. If so, &c. &c." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 583.

"is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated by the success of his new comedy that he has thought everything that concerned him must be of importance to the public." "I fancy, sir," rejoined Boswell, "that this <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> is the first time that he has been engaged in such an adventure." "Why, sir," laughed Johnson, "I believe it is the first time he has *beat*; he may have been *beaten* before. This, sir, is a new plume to him." \*

A few days later, Boswell repaired to his Fleet-street place of worship with news that he had been to see Goldsmith, and with regrets that he had fallen into a loose way of talking. He reported him to have said, "As I take my shoes from the shoemaker, and my coat from the tailor, so I take my religion from the priest." A silly thing to say, if gravely said: but not so, if merely used to dismiss Boszy's pestering habit of intruding solemn subjects, and flourishing weapons of argument over them which he knew not how to handle. But Johnson happened to be in no humour to discriminate, and simply answered: "Sir, he knows nothing; he has made up his mind about nothing." †

On the thirteenth of April the three dined alone with General Oglethorpe and his family, and Goldsmith showed them that at least he could sing. After taking prominent part in the after-dinner talk, expatiating on one of his favourite themes of the effect of luxury in degenerating races, and maintaining afterwards a discussion with Johnson, ‡ he sang with great applause, on joining

\* *Boswell*, iii. 247.

† iii. 252. It was a few days after this that Boswell dined with Johnson, and as the account has not only a certain interest for us, but is more creditable to the relater's good sense than other things necessarily recorded in my volumes, I quote it: "I had gratified my curiosity much in dining with Jean Jacques Rousseau, while he lived in the wilds of Neufchâtel: I had as great a curiosity to dine with Dr. Samuel Johnson, in the dusky recess of a court in Fleet-street. I supposed we should scarcely have knives and forks, and only some strange, uncouth, ill-drest dish; but I found every thing in very good order. We had no other company but Mrs. Williams and a young woman whom I did not know. . . We had very good soup, a boiled leg of lamb and spinach, a veal pie, and a rice pudding." iii. 252-3.

‡ Goldsmith expatiated on the common topic, that the race of our people was degenerated, and that this was owing to luxury. JOHNSON: "Sir, in the first place, I

the ladies at tea, not only Tony Lumpkin's song of the *Three Jolly Pigeons*, but a very pretty one to an Irish tune (the *Humours of Ballamagairy*, afterwards sung by Irish Johnstone, and appropriated in the delightful *Melodies* of Moore), which he had written for Miss Harcastle, but which Mrs. Bulkley cut out, not being able to sing. Two days later, the three again met at General Paoli's; and what even Boswell noted down of Goldsmith's share in the conversation is no unreasonable answer to his own and Johnson's multiplied charges of absurdity and ignorance. What Goldsmith says for the most part is excellent sense, very tersely and happily expressed. The exception was a hasty remark upon Sterne, to whose writings he was not yet become reconciled. Johnson had instanced "the man Sterne" as having had engagements for three months, in proof that anybody who has a name will have plenty of invitations in London. "And a very dull fellow," interposed Goldsmith. "Why no, sir," said Johnson. He came off better in a subsequent good-humoured hit against Johnson himself, who, describing his poor-author days, and the quantities of prefaces and dedications he had written, declared that he had dedicated to the royal family all round: "And perhaps, sir," suggested Goldsmith, "not one sentence of wit in a whole dedication?" "Perhaps not, sir," the other humanely admitted.\*

"doubt the fact. I believe there are as many tall men in England now, as ever there were. But, secondly, supposing the stature of our people to be diminished, that is not owing to luxury; for, sir, consider to how very small a proportion of our people luxury can reach. . . You will observe, there is no man who works at any particular trade, but you may know him from his appearance to do so. One part or the other of his body being more used than the rest, he is in some degree deformed; but, sir, that is not luxury. A tailor sits cross-legged; but that is not luxury." GOLDSMITH: "Come, you're just going to the same place by another road." JOHNSON: "Nay, sir, I say that is not *luxury*. Let us take a walk from Charing-cross to Whitechapel, through, I suppose, the greatest series of shops in the world: what is there in any of these shops (if you except gin-shops) that can do any human being any harm?" GOLDSMITH: "Well, sir, I'll accept your challenge. The very next shop to Northumberland House is a pickle-shop." JOHNSON: "Well, sir; do we not know that a maid can in one afternoon make pickles sufficient to serve a whole family for a year? nay, that five pickle-shops can serve all the kingdom? Besides, sir, there is no harm done to any body by the making of pickles, or the eating of pickles." iii. 256-7.

\* Boswell, iii. 266.

And here once for all let me say, as to Goldsmith's share in this and other conversations now to be recorded, that it is never a real deficiency of sense or knowledge that is to be noted in him, so much as an occasional blundering precipitancy which does no <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> justice to what is evidently a view of the subject not incorrect in the main. It will in some sort illustrate my meaning to quote a passage from Swift's *Journal to Stella*.\* "I have," he writes, "my mouth full of water, and was going to spit it out, because I reasoned with myself, how could I write when my mouth was full? Have not you done things like that, *reasoned wrong at first thinking?*" This is what Goldsmith was constantly doing in society, reasoning wrong at first thinking: with the disadvantage that those first thoughts got blurted out, and the thoughts that corrected them came too late.†

He and Johnson, still at Paoli's dinner-table, fell into something like an argument as to whether Signor Martinelli, a very fashionable and complacent teacher of Italian who had written a history of England (he was present at the dinner, or they would hardly have spoken so respectfully of a mere compilation from Rapin), should continue his history to the present day. "To be sure he should," said Goldsmith. "No, sir," said Johnson, "he would give great offence. He would have to tell of almost all the living great what they do not wish to be told." To this Goldsmith replied, that it might perhaps be necessary for a native to be more cautious; but a foreigner, who came among us without prejudice, might be considered as holding the place of a judge, and might speak his mind freely. Johnson retorted that the foreigner

\* *Works*, ii. 76.

† Macaulay's view does not appear materially to differ from this. "Minds differ as rivers differ. There are transparent and sparkling rivers from which it is delightful to drink as they flow; to such rivers the minds of such men as Burke and Johnson may be compared. But there are rivers of which the water when first drawn is turbid and noisome, but becomes pellucid as crystal and delicious to the taste if it be suffered to stand till it has deposited a sediment; and such a river is a type of the mind of Goldsmith. His first thoughts on every subject were confused even to absurdity, but they required only a little time to work themselves clear. When he wrote, they had that time." *Biog. Ess.* 69.



was just as much in danger of catching "the error and mistaken enthusiasm" of the people he happened to be among. "Sir," persisted Goldsmith, "he wants only to sell his history, and  
 1773.  
 æt. 45. "to tell truth: one an honest, the other a laudable motive."  
 "Sir," returned Johnson, "they are both laudable motives. "It is laudable in a man to wish to live by his labours; but he "should write so as he *may* live by them, not so as he may be "knocked on the head. I would advise him to be at Calais before "he writes his history of the present age. A foreigner who attaches "himself to a political party in this country, is in the worst state "that can be imagined; he is looked upon as a mere intermeddler. "A native may do it from interest." "Or principle," interposed Boswell. Goldsmith's observation on this was not very logical, it must be confessed. "There are people who tell a hundred "political lies every day," he said, "and are not hurt by it. "Surely, then, one may tell truth with safety." "Why, sir," Johnson answered, "a man had rather have a hundred lies told of "him, than one truth which he does not wish to be told." "Well," protested Goldsmith, "for my part, I'd tell the truth, and shame "the devil." "Yes, sir," said the other, "but the devil will be "angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I "should choose to be out of the reach of his claws." "His claws "can do you no harm, when you have the shield of truth," was Goldsmith's happy retort, which on the whole perhaps left the victory with him.\* The same spirit, but not so good an argument, was in his subsequent comment on Johnson's depreciation of the learning of Harris of Salisbury,† the first Lord Malmesbury's father. "He may not be an eminent Grecian," he interposed, "but he is what is much better: he is a worthy humane man." "Nay, sir," said Johnson, "that will as much prove that he can "play upon the fiddle as well as Giardini, as that he is an eminent

\* Boswell, iii. 259.

† Boswell, iii. 266-7. "The most modest of all books," says Mrs. Piozzi of the *Hermes*, in one of those MS. notes to which I have before referred, "for its author "only sends you back to Aristotle at every word in every page, I think." She had got this from Johnson.

"Grecian." Goldsmith felt this; and turned off with a remark that the greatest musical performers have small emoluments.\* "Giardini, I am told, does not get above seven hundred a year." "That," replied Johnson, with a philosophy worthy of Adam Smith, "is indeed but little for a man to get, who does best  
1773.  
Æt. 45.
 "that which so many endeavour to do." Then there was some talk about *She Stoops to Conquer*; and little weaknesses of Goldsmith's peeped out.

Somebody wondered if the King would come to see the new play. "I wish he would," said Goldsmith quickly. "Not," he added, with a show of indifference meant to cover his too great earnestness, "that it would do me the least good." "Well then, sir," said Johnson, laughing, "let us say it would do *him* good. No, sir, this affectation will not pass: it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who would not wish to please the chief magistrate?" "I *do* wish to please him," returned Goldsmith frankly, and eager to repair his error. "I remember a line in Dryden,

'And every poet is the monarch's friend.'

"It ought to be reversed." "Nay, there are finer lines in Dryden on this subject," said Johnson; and, not caring for the moment to recollect that their host had been a rebel, he quoted the couplet,

"For colleges on bounteous kings depend,  
 And never rebel was to arts a friend."

"Nay," said Paoli, "successful rebels might." "Happy rebel-

\* Goldsmith might have spoken more confidently. Against Johnson's depreciation of the learning of Harris, and the frequent sneers of Walpole, and (which is more important) the objection of Gray, who instanced the *Hermes* as what he called the "shallow profound" (*Works*, v. 35), are to be set off the weighty opinions of such men as Gibbon, Dugald Stewart, and Coleridge. I would add that some dialogues by Harris (and other lighter works of his are equally accessible), which show him to have been what Goldsmith asserted him to be, something more worthy and humane than mere scholarship would have entitled him to be thought, will be found at the end of the novel of *David Simple* by Fielding's sister, to which Fielding himself wrote a charming preface. "I wish you had been with me last week" writes Joseph Warton to his brother in 1746 (*Wooll*, 215), "when I spent two evenings with Fielding, and his sister, who wrote *David Simple*, and you may guess I was very well entertained. The lady indeed retir'd pretty soon, but Russell and I sat up with the Poet till one or two in the morning, and were inexpressibly diverted. I find he values, as he justly may, his *Joseph Andrews* above all his writings."

"lions," exclaimed Martinelli. "We have no such phrase," said Goldsmith. "But have you not the *thing*?" asked Paoli. "Yes," the other answered; "all our *happy* revolutions. They have <sup>1773.</sup> "hurt our constitution, and will hurt it, till we mend it by <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> "another HAPPY REVOLUTION." Boswell adds that he never before discovered that his friend Goldsmith had "so much of the "old prejudice in him:" but the remark was more probably thrown out, at once to please old Johnson, and at the same time vindicate his own independence in the matter of royalty. The turn taken by the conversation would indicate this.

"Il a fait," said Paoli of Goldsmith, "un compliment très-gracieux à une certaine grande dame." The allusion was to a strong intimation in *She Stoops to Conquer*, of its author's dislike of the Royal Marriage Act, and sympathy with its victim the Duchess of Gloucester. The Duke of Cumberland had been forbidden the Court on his marriage with a handsome widow, Mrs. Horton (Lord Carhampton's, better known as Colonel Luttrell's, sister), a year before: but on the Duke of Gloucester's subsequent avowal of his marriage with another and more charming widow, Lady Waldegrave (Sir Edward Walpole's natural daughter), the King's indignation found vent in the Royal Marriage Act; which was hotly opposed by the whigs as an edict of tyranny, Lords Rockingham and Camden\* contesting it at every stage in the Lords, and Gold-

\* Camden, in one of his speeches contesting the bill, made a considerable sensation by the way in which he pointed out the inconvenience and injustice that might arise from the proposal to extend its provisions to all the descendants of George II, who, according to the common process of descent, might be expected in a few generations to amount to many thousands; in support of which he mentioned that he knew an undoubted legitimate descendant of a King of England who was then keeping an alehouse. Camden greatly understated the case, however, if the poet Gray's computation was right, "that there must go a million of ancestors in twenty generations, to everybody's composition." In our own day a curious volume has been published descriptive of individuals who have the right to quarter the royal arms, from which it appears that the princely blood of Plantagenet now flows through the humblest veins, and the noble dust of the Tudors presides in person over beer-barrels. It shows us carpenters, sextons, saddlers, shoemakers, butchers, upholsterers, and tailors, among the descendants of the sons of Edward the First, and Edward the Third. One of its transformations, however, I am disposed to think less remarkable than at first would appear. It exhibits to us a man taking toll at a turnpike, almost under the

smith (perhaps for Burke's sake) helping to make it unpopular with the people. "We'll go to France," says Hastings to Miss Neville, "for there, even among slaves, the laws of marriage  
"are respected." Said on the first night, this had directed <sup>1773.</sup>  
<sub>Æt. 45.</sub> repeated cheering and popular applause to the Duke of Gloucester, who sat in one of the boxes; and it now drew forth the allusion of Paoli. But Boswell was not content with a mere hint. Feeling that Goldsmith "might not wish to avow positively his  
"taking part against the Court," and that therefore it was not fair to endeavour to bring him to a confession, he naturally resolved, upon the instant, to bring him to it if he could: so, in order that he might hear the exact truth from himself, he straightway doubted if the allusion had ever been intended. Goldsmith smiled and hesitated; when Paoli hastened to relieve him with an elegant metaphor. "Monsieur Goldsmith est comme la mer, qui jette des perles  
"et beaucoup d'autres belles choses, sans s'en appercevoir."  
"Très bien dit, et très élégamment," said Goldsmith, highly pleased.

Five days afterwards he dined at Thrall's; again argued with Johnson; and seems to me to have had the best of the argument. Talking of poor Fitzherbert's melancholy suicide the year before, Johnson said he had often thought that, after a man had taken the resolution to kill himself, it was not courage in him to do anything, however desperate, because he had nothing to fear. "I  
"don't see that," remarked Goldsmith, reasonably enough. "Nay,  
"but my dear sir," said Johnson, rather unreasonably, "why  
"should you not see what every one else sees?" "Why," was Goldsmith's reply, "it is for fear of something that he has resolved  
"to kill himself; and will not that timid disposition restrain him?" Johnson's retort was a sophism exactly confirming Goldsmith's view. The argument arose, he said, on the resolution taken, not

very walls of those feudal towers that gave the name to the barony of which he is a coheir. But what, after all, were his ancestors the feudal barons, what are kings themselves, but toll and tax collectors on a great scale?—See a little quarto entitled *Royal Descents*, published by Nichols and Nichols in 1846.



on the inducement to take it. Determine, and you have nothing more to fear; you may go and take the King of Prussia by the nose, at the head of his army; "you cannot fear the rack,"  
 1773. "who are resolved to kill yourself." \* Goldsmith's obvious  
 Æt. 45. answer might have been, It is precisely because I fear the rack that I have resolved to kill myself: but there the argument ended.

Garriek's vanity was another topic started at this dinner; and Johnson, while he accounted for it and justified it, by the many bellows that had blown the fire, was interrupted by the "and such bellows too!" of Boswell, who proceeded to count up the notes of famous people (enough to turn his head) that he had persuaded Garriek to show him: "Lord Mansfield with his cheeks like to burst, Lord Chatham like an Æolus:" all which praises Johnson quietly explained with a ready adaptation of a line in Congreve, "True. When he whom everybody else flatters, flatters me, then I am truly happy." † Whereupon quick little Mrs. Thrale reminded him that he was here only adapting Congreve. "Yes, madam," he replied, "in the *Way of the World*."

"If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see

"That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me!"

But he was not so tolerant of his old friend eight days later, when the same party, with Reynolds, Langton, and Thrale, dined at General Oglethorpe's. Goldsmith had said he thought it "mean and gross flattery" in Garriek to have foisted into the dialogue of Beaumont and Fletcher's play of the *Chances*, which he had revived that year, a compliment to the Queen; when Johnson, with somewhat needless warmth, remarked, "As to meanness, sir, how is it mean in a player, a showman, a fellow who exhibits himself for a shilling, to flatter his queen?" In admirable taste was then the calm and just rebuke of the kindly Reynolds. "I do not perceive why the profession of a player should be despised; for the great and ultimate end of all the employments of mankind is to produce amusement. Garriek produces more amusement than anybody."

\* Boswell, iii. 270-1.

† Boswell, iii. 268.

This emboldened Boswell to hazard the analogy of a lawyer with a player, the one exhibiting for his fee as the other for his shilling; whereon Johnson roughly seized him, turned the laugh against him, and covered his own retreat. "Why, sir, what does this <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub>  
 "prove? only that a lawyer is worse. Boswell is now like  
 "Jack in the *Tale of a Tub*, who, when he is puzzled by an argu-  
 "ment" (it was Arbuthnot's, not Swift's, Jack, and it was for no  
 such reason, but it served Johnson's laugh to say so), "hangs him-  
 "self. He thinks I shall cut him down," and here he laughed vocife-  
 rously, "but I'll let him hang."\* Boswell's comfort in annoyances  
 of this sort was to diffuse the annoyance by describing the whole  
 scene next day to some one whom it equally affected. Garrick  
 would in this case, of course, be the first to hear all that had  
 passed. But Garrick's revenges on Johnson were harmless enough.†  
 At his angriest, he would only pay him off‡ by exhibiting his fond-

\* Johnson's allusion was not to the piece of wit he mentions, but to the *History of John Bull*. Pleasantly contrasting with this vociferous attack on Boswell is the high-bred courtesy with which Reynolds comes to his relief: "Mr. Boswell thinking that the profession of a lawyer being unquestionably honourable, if he can show the profession of a player to be more honourable, he proves his argument." iii. 277.

† "I repeated this sally to Garrick," he tells us, on a similar occasion to the present, "and wondered to find his sensibility as a writer not a little irritated by it. To soothe him, I observed that Johnson spared none of us," &c. (iii. 79.) Somewhat later, he narrates another; and then adds: "He was always jealous that Johnson spoke lightly of him. I recollect his exhibiting him to me one day, as if saying, 'Davy' 'has some convivial pleasantry about him, but 'tis a futile fellow:' which he uttered perfectly with the tone and air of Johnson." (v. 264.) On the other hand, it is worth quoting what is said by Mrs. Hannah More, when, writing to her sister in April 1786 of the "fashion" which Mrs. Piozzi's just published *Anecdotes* had become, she strongly objects to the occasional harsh things reported in them against Garrick. "This new-fashioned biography seems to value itself upon perpetuating everything that is injurious and detracting. I perfectly recollect the candid answer Garrick once made to my inquiry why Johnson was so often harsh and unkind in his speeches, both of and to him. 'Why, *Nine*,' he replied, 'it is very natural: 'is it not to be expected he should be angry, that I, who have so much less merit 'than he, should have had so much greater success?'" *Memoirs*, ii. 16. On the other hand, see *Boswell*, vii. 137-8.

‡ Garrick was always the more considerate to this prejudice against players, exhibited so strongly in the *Life of Savage*, and never wholly dropped in later life, because of Johnson's absolute ignorance, according to him, of what the art of acting really was. He had made no advance in this respect since the old days in Lichfield, when he would say of the Sir Harry Wildair of the theatre, "There is a courtly vivacity 'about the fellow,'"—the actor who played the part, sir, pursued Garrick, being in

ness for his old wife, Tetty, in their earlier London or Lichfield days; or he might show him using the most uncouth gesticulations to squeeze a lemon into a punch-bowl, looking round the <sup>1773.</sup> company and calling out with a broad Lichfield twang, <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> "Who's for *poonsh*?" or perhaps he would imitate his delivery of the celebrated lines of Ovid,

"Os homini sublime dedit,—cœlumque tueri  
Jussit,—et erectos ad sidera—tollere vultus,"\*

which he gave with pauses and half-whistlings interjected, looking *downwards* all the time, and absolutely touching the ground with a kind of contorted movement of his arms while he pronounced the last four words, until all the listeners, exhausted with laughter, implored the mimic to desist.†

Another subject started at Oglethorpe's table was the custom of eating dogs at Otaheite, which Goldsmith named as existing also in China, adding that a dog butcher was as common there as any other butcher, and that when he walked abroad (he quite believed this, and stated it in his *Natural History*) all the dogs fell on him. Johnson did not contradict it, but explained it by the "smell of carnage." "Yes," repeated Goldsmith, "there is a general abhorrence in animals at the signs of massacre. If you put a tub full of blood into a stable, the horses are like to go mad." "I doubt that," said Johnson. "Nay, sir," Goldsmith gravely assured him, "it is a fact well authenticated." "You had better

fact the most vulgar ruffian that ever went on the boards. *Boswell*, vi. 98. On the other hand, we recognise a shrewd and well-felt piece of criticism when Johnson says of Garrick's *Archer*, "He does not play it well, sir. The gentleman should break through the footman, which is not the case as he does it." We listen with less confidence when he says that Garrick could "represent all modes of life but that of an easy fine-bred gentleman" (iv. 132), because our confidence is greater in Garrick's than in Johnson's experience of that kind of gossamer existence.

\* Of which, let me interpose, the translation by Dryden, where with the addition of a single word he puts a Christian elevation and grandeur into the noble thought of the old Pagan,

Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes

Beholds his own hereditary skies, *Ov. Met.* i. line 13.

deserves to be not less celebrated.

† *Boswell*, v. 203, and see vi. 96.



“prove it,” Thrale quietly interposed, “before you put it into your book on Natural History. You may do it in my stable if you will.” But Johnson would have him do no such thing; for the very sensible reason that he had better, taking his information from <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> others as he must, leave others responsible for such errors as he might make in so comprehensive a book as his *Animated Nature*, than assume responsibility himself by the arduous task of experiment, and expose himself to blame for not making experiments as to every particular.\* From this the conversation passed

\* *Boswell*, iii. 276. Cooke relates an amusing instance of one practical experiment by which Goldsmith proposed to test a theory thrown out in his book. “The Doctor was at times very absent, and showed such an inconsistency of mind, that ‘if a person was to judge of his literary knowledge from some particular instances, they must think very meanly of his information or talents. He was once engaged ‘in a violent dispute with George Bellas, the proctor (at the very time he was ‘writing his *History of Animated Nature*), about the *motion* of the upper jaw; and, ‘when Bellas laughed at him on the absurdity of his assertion, the Doctor very ‘seriously, but warmly, desired him to put his finger in his mouth, and he’d convince ‘him. Being soon after desired by a friend to recollect, what he had, asserted, ‘he paused for some time, and said, ‘In truth I had forgot myself, but any way I ‘ought not to have given up the victory to such an antagonist.’” *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 261. The passage in the *Animated Nature* to which Cooke alludes as connected with this odd experimental test, I am not acquainted with; unless it be that equally singular illustration already given (*ante*, p. 266), from the recollection of his own student days at Edinburgh, on the subject of yawning, which would seem to have reference rather to the lower than the upper jaw. I take this opportunity of sub-joining one or two other passages that have an interest personal to the writer. It has been stated, on the authority of his book, that Goldsmith advocated entire abstinence from wine; but the inference is not supported by the passage cited for it (ii. 8), which is simply a comment on the fast-days prescribed by the roman-catholic church. “How far it may be enjoined in the Scriptures, I will not take upon me to say; but “this may be asserted, that if the utmost benefit to the individual, and the most “extensive advantage to society, serve to mark any institution one of Heaven, this “of abstinence may be reckoned among the foremost.” Another passage might seem to show that he had at one time taken some part in the direction or management of the Society of Arts. Speaking (iii. 175) of Gesner’s description of various traps for the catching of rats and mice, he adds, that this society had proposed a reward for the most ingenious contrivance for that purpose, “and I observed almost every candid date passing off descriptions as inventions of his own. I thought it was cruel to “detect the plagiarism, or frustrate the humble ambition of those who would be thought “the inventors of a mouse-trap.” A third cleverly-written passage (v. 273), in which, after pointing out the close resemblance between the frog and the toad in appearance, he stops to show that “such is the force of habit, begun in early prejudice, that those “who consider the one as a harmless, playful animal, turn from the other with “horror and disgust,” has also an autobiographical interest for us. Admirably



to literary subjects, and Goldsmith spoke slightly of the character of Mallet. "Why, sir," remarked Johnson, "Mallet had

"talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long  
<sup>1773.</sup>  
 Et. 45." "as he himself lived; and that, let me tell you, is a good  
 deal." "But," persisted Goldsmith, "I cannot agree that it  
 was so. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural  
 death. I consider an author's literary reputation to be alive only  
 while his name will insure a good price for his copy from the  
 booksellers. I will get you" (and if the spirit of controversy was  
 here rising in Johnson, his friend at once disarmed it) "a hundred  
 guineas for any thing whatever that you shall write, if you will  
 put your name to it." Johnson did not reply, but began to praise  
*She Stoops to Conquer*.

describing the revolting picture into which the imagination here colours the reality, he continues: "Yet upon my first seeing a toad, none of all those deformities in the least affected me with sensations of loathing: born, as I was, in a country where there are no toads, I had prepared my imagination for some dreadful object; but there seemed nothing to me more alarming in the sight, than in that of a common frog; and indeed, for some time, I mistook and handled the one for the other. When first informed of my mistake, I very well remember my sensations; I wondered how I had escaped with safety, after handling and dissecting a toad, which I had mistaken for a frog. I then began to lay in a fund of horror against the whole tribe, which, though convinced they are harmless, I shall never get rid of. My first imaginations were too strong, not only for my reason, but for the conviction of my senses."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE CLUB.

1773.

MEASURED by the test we have seen Goldsmith apply to Johnson's reputation with the booksellers, his own, though still alive, must be held as now sadly in arrear. He had at this time several disputes with booksellers pending,\* and his circumstances were <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> verging to positive distress. The necessity of completing his *Animated Nature*, for which all the money had been received and spent, hung like a millstone upon him; his advances had been considerable upon other works, as yet not even begun; the money from his comedy was still coming in, but it could not, with the debts it had to satisfy, float his stranded fortunes; and he was now, in what leisure he could get from his larger book, working at a *Grecian History* in the hope of procuring means to meet his daily liabilities. The future was thus gradually and gloomily darkening; but, while he could, he was happy and content not to look beyond the present, cheerful or careless as it might be.† He sought relief in society, and went more than ever to the club.

\* Among them one with Davies, to which Tom mysteriously refers when he mentions, as highly characteristic of Goldsmith, the difference he had with "a bookseller," when, the matter being referred to Johnson, Johnson gave it in favour of the bookseller; and Goldsmith "was enraged to find that one author should have so little feeling for another as to determine a dispute to his disadvantage in favour of "a tradesman." *Life of Garrick*, ii. 158.

† Cooke here repeats the charge to which I formerly adverted, of a fondness for play; observing, after a mention of the very large sum made by *She Stoops to Conquer*, that "what with his liberalities to poor authors, and a passion for gambling,

The change he had himself very strongly advocated was now made in this celebrated society; the circle of its members was enlarged to twenty; and he took renewed interest in its meetings. A sort of understanding was at the same time entered into, that the limit of attendances to secure continued membership, should be at least twice in five weeks; and that more frequent attendance would be expected from all. The election of Garrick was proposed to fill the first vacancy. This had been zealously seconded by Goldsmith; three nights before *She Stoops to Conquer* came out, Garrick made his first appearance in Gerrard-street; and there was a special celebration a few weeks later, alleged to have been in honour both of the election and the comedy, when the hospitable brewer of Southwark had a table laid in one of his new brewing-coppers, and beef-steaks dressed at the furnace

"he found himself at the end of the year in considerable debt." And I take the opportunity of subjoining the very sensible remarks made by this writer, who always treats Goldsmith fairly within his means of judgment, on the alteration in his modes and ways of living during his latter years. "When," says Cooke, "he exchanged his simple habits for those of the great, he contracted their follies without their fortunes or qualifications. Hence, when he eat or drank with them, he contracted habits for expence which he could not individually afford; when he squandered his time with them, he squandered part of his income; and when he lost his money at play with them, he had not *their talents* to recover it at another opportunity. He had discernment to see all this, but had not the courage to break those fetters he had forged. The consequence was, he was obliged to run in debt, and his debts rendered him, at times, so very melancholy and dejected, that I am sure he felt himself, at least the last years of his life, a very unhappy man." *Europ. Mag.* xxiv. 172-3. Substantially the same statement had been made several years before by a writer to whom Goldsmith was as intimately known, and who, shortly after his death, thus spoke of him: "While this ingenious man was in the pay of Newbery, and lived in Green Arbour-court, he was a tolerable economist, and lived happily; but when he emerged from obscurity, and enjoyed a great income, he had no principle or idea of saving, or any degree of care; was dreadfully necessitous ten months of every year, and never at that period was quiet, or free from demands he could not pay. When the excess of the evil roused him, he retired at times into the country to a farm-house, where he lived for little or nothing, letting nobody know where he was; and, employing almost the whole day in writing, did not return to London till he was so well stocked with finished manuscripts, as to be able to clear himself. These intervals of labour and retirement, he has declared were among the happiest periods of his life. He enjoyed brilliant moments of wit, festivity and conversation, but the bulk of all his latter days were poisoned with want and anxiety." I copied this from a magazine of the time to which unfortunately I have lost the reference.

were set before Johnson, Reynolds, Goldsmith, Garrick, Burke, and Baretti.\* On Beauclerc's proposition, the same night of Garrick's election, his friend and fellow-traveller Lord Charlemont was chosen, the Irish peer whose subsequent patriotism made the <sup>1773.</sup> title so illustrious. Burke then proposed a friend of Lord <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> Charlemont's and his own, Mr. Agmondesham Vesey, the husband of Mrs. Montagu's blue-stocking friend; introducing his name with the remark that he was a man of gentle manners. "Sir," interrupted Johnson, "you need say no more. When you have said a man of "gentle manners, you have said enough." Nevertheless, when Vesey, with schoolboy gentleness of talk, introduced one day at the club the subject of Catiline's conspiracy, Johnson withdrew his attention and thought about Tom Thumb.† Not many days after Vesey's election, Mr. William Jones, a young lawyer and accomplished scholar of the Temple, who had distinguished himself at University-college with Chambers and Scott, and had this year made pleasing additions to the select store of Eastern literature, was proposed by Chambers and elected. A fifth candidate was now in agitation; proposed on the 23rd of April (when Goldsmith occupied the chair)‡ by Johnson, and strenuously seconded by

\* Thursday, the 13th of May, is named in the last *Life of Reynolds* (ii. 53) as the day of this dinner, our knowledge of which we owe to the mention made of it in Northcote's *Life* (i. 317).

† Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 81.

‡ It is curious that the only fragment of correspondence between Johnson and Goldsmith that has been preserved, if indeed any other ever existed, is the formal note in which Boswell's name is submitted to Goldsmith as the chairman of the night. "April 23, 1773. Sir, I beg that you will excuse my absence to the club; I am going this evening to Oxford. I have another favour to beg. It is that I may be considered as proposing Mr. Boswell for a candidate of our society, and that he may be considered as regularly nominated. I am, Sir, your most humble servant, SAM. JOHNSON." Of course the "Sir" and the "humble servant" are the ordinary phrases in use on such an occasion, and imply nothing of the tone of private intercourse; but apart from the fact that this was an official note, hasty judgments are not to be formed upon the mere manner of wording letters in the last or preceding centuries. With the pen in his hand, Johnson was "Sir" and "your humble servant" often to the dearest of his friends; and, from "madam" to "my dearest mistress" in his letters to Mrs. Thrale, or from "dear madam" to "my dearest love" in his letters to his daughter-in-law, were with him the most ordinary transitions within the space of very few lines. I say so much, because hasty in-



Beauclerc. This was no other than Boswell; and not a little surprised were the majority of the members to hear the name. They did not think that Johnson's love of flattery, or Beauclerc's <sup>1773.</sup> love of a joke, would have carried either so far. But Johnson <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> was resolute, and had but one answer to all who objected. "If they had refused, sir," he said afterwards to Boswell, "they 'knew they'd never have got in another. I'd have kept them all 'out.'" Burke had not yet seen the busy, consequential, officious young Scotchman, who had so effectually tacked himself on to their old friend; but what he had heard induced him to express a doubt if he was "fit" for Gerrard-street, and the doubt was not likely to be removed by Boswell's own efforts to secure his election. He recommended himself to the various members, he tells us, as in a canvass for an election into parliament.\*

Well was that seat deserved, nevertheless, by James Boswell. Johnson invented the right word to express his merit, when he called him a "clubable" man. Burke afterwards admitted that though he and several of the members had wished to keep him out, none of them were sorry when he had got in; and he told Johnson, at the same time, that their new member had so much good-humour naturally, it was scarce to be held a virtue in him.† Boswell was indeed eminently social, for society was his very idol, to which he made sacrifice of everything.‡ He had all kinds of brisk and lively ways, good-humour, and perpetual cheerfulness. He was to Reynolds, says Ffarington the academician, the harbinger of festivity.§ He was Lord Stowell's realisation of a goodnatured

ferences have more than once been made from supposed "coolness-es" in Johnson's letters.

\* *Boswell*, iv. 75.

† *Boswell*, iv. 76.

‡ "Mr. Boswell," says Malone, "professed the Scotch and the English law; but had never taken very great pains on the subject. His father, Lord Auchinleck, told him one day, that it would cost him more trouble to hide his ignorance in these professions, than to show his knowledge. This Boswell owned he had found to be true." I quote this from a paper in the *Europ. Mag.*

§ "Sir Joshua was never more happy than when, on such occasions, Boswell was seated within his hearing." The Royal Academy, some years later, gratified their president by electing him secretary for foreign correspondence, and so constituting him an honorary member of their body. See Ffarington's *Memoir*, cciv.



GOLDSMITH AT ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE.





jolly fellow. Everybody admits that the frosts of our English nature melted at his approach, and that the reserve which too often damps the pleasure of English society he had the happy faculty of dissipating. Malone knew his weaknesses (he always made <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> "battle" against his account of Goldsmith, for instance, as a folly and a mistake, which, in quite as positive terms, Reynolds, Burke, Lord Charlemont, Percy, and even George Steevens \* also did); but he knew his strength not less. His eyes glistened, says that unimpassioned observer, and his countenance brightened up, "when he saw the human face divine." The drawback from it all, in social life, was his incontinence of tongue; which had made his name a by-word for eavesdropper, talebearer, and babbling spy. He had in this respect but one fault, as Goldsmith said of Hickey, but that one was a thumper. Even this fault, however, served for protection against his failings in other respects. He blabbed them all, as he blabbed everything else; and his friends had ample notice to act on the defensive. He told Johnson one day that he was occasionally troubled with fits of stinginess. "Why, sir, so am I," returned Johnson, "*but I do not tell it*;" and, mindful of the warning, he took care, the next time he borrowed sixpence, to guard himself against being dunned for it. "Boswell," he said, "*lend me sixpence—not to be repaid.*" †

The day fixed for Boswell's ballot was Friday, the 30th of April, when Beauclerc invited him to dinner at his new house in the Adelphi; and among the members of the club assembled at Beauclerc's, as though to secure his election, were Johnson, Reynolds,

\* I am bound to add, at the same time, that one of the last sneers levelled at Goldsmith, while he yet lived, proceeded from this clever unscrupulous man, always consistently bent on making what mischief he could, if consistent in nothing else. Thanking Garrick, on the 6th March, 1774, for his vote at the club, and alluding to Charles Fox's election with his own, he proceeds to indulge himself with a sarcasm on Goldsmith's fine waistcoats and his homely looks in spite of them. "If the *bon-ton* should prove a contagious disorder among us, it will be curious to trace its progress. I have already seen it breaking out in Dr. G——, under the form of many a waistcoat; but I believe Dr. G—— will be the last man in whom the symptoms of it will be detected." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 613.

† *Bos.* viii. 181. "He has now and then borrowed a shilling of me; and when I asked him for it again, seemed to be rather out of humour."



Lord Charlemont, Vesey, and Langton. Goldsmith was not present; but he was the subject of the after-dinner conversation.\* They did not sit long, however; but went off in a body to the club, leaving Boswell at Beauclerc's till the fate of his election should be announced to him. He sat in a state of anxiety, he tells us, which even the charming conversation of Lady Di Beauclerc could not entirely dissipate; but in a short time he received the welcome tidings of his election, hastened to Gerrard-street, "and was introduced to such a society as can seldom be found." He now for the first time saw Burke: and at the same supper-table sat Johnson, Garrick, and Goldsmith; Mr. Jones and Dr. Nugent; Reynolds, Lord Charlemont, Langton, Chamier, Vesey, and Beauclerc. As he entered, Johnson rose with gravity to acquit himself of a pledge to his fellow-members; and, leaning on his chair as on a desk or pulpit, gave Bozzy a *charge* with humorous formality, pointing out the conduct expected from him as a good member of the club. A warning not to blab, or tattle, doubtless formed part of it; and the injunction was on the whole not unfaithfully obeyed. We owe to Langton, not to Boswell, the report of a capital bit of Johnson's criticism on this particular evening; when, Goldsmith having produced a printed *Ode* which he had been hearing read by its author in public (at the astonishing rate of five shillings each for

\* "Goldsmith being mentioned: JOHNSON. 'It is amazing how little Goldsmith knows. He seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else.' SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS: 'Yet there is no man whose company is more liked.' JOHNSON: 'To be sure, sir. When people find a man of the most distinguished abilities as a writer, their inferior while he is with them, it must be highly gratifying to them. What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true,—he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning, that he is master of a subject in his study, and can write well upon it; but when he comes into company, grows confused, and unable to talk. Take him as a poet, his *Traveller* is a very fine performance; ay, and so is his *Deserted Village*, were it not sometimes too much the echo of his *Traveller*. Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as an historian, he stands in the first class.' BOSWELL: 'An historian! My dear sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of the *Roman History* with the works of other historians of this age?' JOHNSON: 'Why, who are before him?' BOSWELL: 'Hume, Robertson,—Lord Lyttelton.' JOHNSON (his antipathy to the Scotch beginning to rise): 'I have not read Hume; but, doubtless, Goldsmith's *History* is better than the *verbiage* of Robertson, or the 'foppery of Dalrymple.'" *Boswell*, iii. 279-80.

admission), Johnson thus disposed of it:\* “Bolder words and  
“more timorous meaning, I think, never were brought together.”



Only once does any of the club-conversation appear to have been carried away, in detail, by Boswell; and a portion of that report

\* Langton's collectanea in *Boswell*, vii. 361. And see iii. 284, where Johnson proposes to match Goldsmith's nonsense by producing what seem to me quite as good lines as many written by himself.

conveys so agreeably the unaffected social character of the Gerrard-street meetings, that it may fitly close\* such attempts as I have made to convey a picture of this remarkable society.

1773.  
Æt. 45. After ranging through every variety of subject; art, politics, place-hunting, debating, languages, literature, public and private virtue (it was the night when Burke announced his famous judgment, that from all the large experience which had been his, he had learnt to think *better* of mankind),† the conversation concluded thus.

\* Perhaps I ought not to omit, however, a somewhat striking passage in the *Tour to the Hebrides*, when, on Boswell suggesting that if the club were to be brought to Aberdeen that ancient university might at once be supplied with professors out of its members only, "Doctor Johnson entered fully into the spirit of this project; and "we immediately fell to distributing the offices. I was to teach civil and Scotch law; Burke, politics and eloquence; Garrick, the art of public speaking; Langton "was to be our Grecian, Colman our Latin professor; Nugent to teach physic; "Lord Charlemont, modern history; Beauclerc, natural philosophy; Vesey, Irish "antiquities, or Celtic learning; Jones, Oriental learning; Goldsmith, poetry and "ancient history; Chamier, commercial politics; Reynolds, painting, and the arts "which have beauty for their object; Chambers, the law of England. Dr. Johnson "at first said, 'I'll trust theology to nobody but myself.' But, upon due consideration that Percy is a clergyman, it was agreed that Percy should teach practical "divinity and British antiquities; Dr. Johnson himself, logic, metaphysics, and "scholastic divinity . . . Dr. Johnson said, we only wanted a mathematician since "Dyer died, who was a very good one; but as to everything else, we should have a "capital university." (iv. 111-112.) Certainly a very striking idea is thus presented of the variety of genius and of accomplishments which that famous society then comprised.

† E. "From the experience which I have had,—and I have had a great deal,—I "have learnt to think *better* of mankind." JOHNSON: "From my experience I have "found them worse in commercial dealings, more disposed to cheat than I had any "notion of; but more disposed to do one another good than I had conceived." J. "Less just and more beneficent." JOHNSON: "And, really, it is wonderful,—considering how much attention is necessary for men to take care of themselves, and "ward off immediate evils which press upon them,—it is wonderful how much they "do for others. As it is said of the greatest liar, that he tells more truth than falsehood; so it may be said of the worst man, that he does more good than evil." Boswell, vii. 66. Need I remind the reader of what the good Mr. Burchell says to Dr. Primrose? "In my progress through life I have ever perceived, that where the "mind was capacious the affections were good. And indeed Providence seems kindly "our friend in this particular, thus to debilitate the understanding where the heart is "corrupt, and diminish the power where there is the will to do mischief." In connection with this subject, too, let me note the distinction between Swift's and Pope's philosophy to which Warburton happily refers in his *Letters* (474). "Swift said, he hated "mankind, though he loved some few individuals, such as Peter, James, and John. "Pope replied, that he loved human nature; but hated many individuals." The original loses somewhat, as generally happens, by transmission. Swift lays down his



"I understand," said Burke, "the hogshead of claret, which this society was favoured with by our friend the dean" (Barnard), is "nearly out; I think he should be written to, to send another of the same kind. Let the request be made with a happy <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> ambiguity of expression, so that we may have the chance of his sending it also as a present." "I am willing," observed Johnson, "to offer my services as secretary on this occasion." "As many as are for Doctor Johnson being secretary," cried another member, "hold up your hands. Carried unanimously." "He will be our dictator," said Boswell. "No," returned Johnson, "the company is to dictate to me. I am only to write for wine; and I am quite disinterested, as I drink none: I shall not be suspected of having forged the application. I am no more than humble scribe." "Then," interposed Burke, inveterate punster that he was, "you shall prescribe." "Very well," cried Boswell; "the first play of words to-day." "No, no," interrupted Reynolds, recalling a previous bad pun of Burke's, "the bulls in Ireland."\* "Were I your dictator," resumed Johnson, "you should have no wine. It would be my business *cavere ne quid detrimenti Res-*

principle thus: "I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities; and all my love is towards individuals: for instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love counsellor such a one and judges such a one. 'Tis so with physicians (I will not speak of my own trade), soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth." Pope, on the other hand, while he avoids an open objection to his friend's philosophy, manages with subtle truth and beauty to insinuate his disapproval. "I really enter," he says, "as fully as you can desire into your principle of love of individuals: and I think the way to have a public spirit is first to have a private one; for who can believe (said a friend of mine) that any man can care for a hundred thousand people, who never cared for one? No ill-humoured man can ever be a patriot, any more than a friend." According to Mrs. Thrale, Johnson went directly contrary to Swift on the point. *Anecdotes*, 272.

\* It was on a talk about emigration and the supply of food, when Burke had started what Johnson denounced as a paradox, and proceeded to reply to with an illustration about cows and bulls, which Burke rather irreverently interrupted. I quote Boswell's pleasant report: "E. There are bulls enough in Ireland. JOHNSON (smiling). So, sir, I should think, from your argument." (vii. 61.) Nay, such was the infection of Burke's example that the sage himself, the denouncer of puns, was sometimes entrapped into punning. "I don't like the Deanery of Ferns," said Burke of the new promotion of their friend Dr. Marlay. "Dr. Heath should have it," ventured Boswell. "Nay, sir," laughed Johnson, introducing another well-known friend, "I should suggest Dr. Moss." See *ante*, 182.



"*publica caperet*, and wine is dangerous. Rome," he added smiling, "was ruined by luxury." "Then," protested Burke, "if  
 "you allow no wine as dictator, you shall not have me for  
 1773.  
 Æt. 45. "your master of the horse."\* The Club lives again for us  
 very pleasantly in this good-humoured friendly talk.

Six days after Boswell's election, he was, with Johnson, Goldsmith, and Langton, among the guests at the dinner-table of booksellers Dilly in the Poultry. They were dissenters; and had asked a minister of their own persuasion, Dr. Mayo, as well as the Rev. Mr. Toplady, to meet their distinguished guests. The conversation first turning upon natural history, Goldsmith contributed to it some curious facts about the partial migrations of swallows ("the stronger ones migrate, the others do not"), and on the subject of the nidification of birds seemed disposed to revive the old question of instinct and reason. "Birds build by instinct," said Johnson; "they never improve; they build their first nest as well as any one they ever build." "Yet we see," remarked Goldsmith, "if you take away a bird's nest with the eggs in it, she will make a slighter nest and lay again." "Sir," said Johnson, "that is because at first she has full time and makes her nest deliberately. In the case you mention she is pressed to lay, and must therefore make her nest quickly, and consequently it will be slight." To which Goldsmith contented himself by remarking that "the nidification of birds is what is least known in natural history, though one of the most curious things in it."† But this easy flow of instructive gossip did not satisfy Boswell. He saw a great opportunity, with a dissenting parson present, of making Johnson "rear"; and so straightway introduced the subject of "toleration." Johnson disagreed of course with Mayo, but with Toplady also; and when they put to him, as a consequence of his argument, that the persecution of the first Christians must be held to have been perfectly right, he frankly declared himself ignorant

\* Boswell, vii. 68.

† *Ibid.*, iii. 200-J. Most charming, as already I have said, are those portions of the *Animated Nature* which refer to this division of natural history.

of any better way of ascertaining the truth than by persecution on the one hand and endurance on the other. "But how is a man  
 "to act, sir?" asked Goldsmith at this point. "Though firmly  
 "convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not think it <sup>1773.</sup>  
 "wrong to expose himself to persecution? Has he a right to <sup>Æt. 45.</sup>  
 "do so? Is it not, as it were, committing voluntary suicide?"  
 "Sir, as to voluntary suicide, as you call it," retorted Johnson,  
 "there are twenty thousand men who will go without scruple to be  
 "shot at, and mount a breach for fivepence a-day." "But," per-  
 sisted Goldsmith, "have they a moral right to do this?" Johnson  
 evaded the question by asserting that a man had better not expose  
 himself to martyrdom who had any doubt about it. "He must be  
 "convinced that he has a delegation from Heaven." "Nay," re-  
 peated Goldsmith, apparently unconscious that he was pressing  
 disagreeably on Johnson, "I would consider whether there is the  
 "greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I see a man  
 "who has fallen into a well, I would wish to help him out; but if  
 "there is a greater probability that he shall pull me in, than that  
 "I shall pull him out, I would not attempt it. So, were I to go to  
 "Turkey, I might wish to convert the grand signior to the Christian  
 "faith; but when I considered that I should probably be put to  
 "death without effectuating my purpose in any degree, I should  
 "keep myself quiet." To this Johnson replied by enlarging on  
 perfect and imperfect obligations, and by repeating that a man, to  
 be a martyr, must be persuaded of a particular delegation from  
 Heaven. "But how," still persisted Goldsmith, "is this to be  
 "known? Our first reformers, who were burnt for not believing  
 "bread and wine to be Christ"—"Sir," interrupted Johnson  
 loudly, and careless what unfounded assertion he threw out to  
 interrupt him, "they were *not* burnt for not believing bread and  
 "wine to be Christ, but for insulting those who did."

What with his dislike of reforming protestants and his impatience  
 of contradiction, Johnson had now become excited to keep the field  
 he had so recklessly seized, and in such manner that none should  
 dispossess him. Goldsmith suffered accordingly. Boswell describes

him during the resumption and continuation of the argument, into which Mayo and Toplady\* again resolutely plunged with their antagonist, sitting in restless agitation from a wish to get in and  
 1773.  
 Æt. 45. "shine;" which certainly was no unnatural wish after the unfair way he had been ousted. Finding himself still excluded, however, he had taken his hat to go away; but yet remained with it for some time in his hand, like a gamester at the close of a long night, lingering still for a favourable opening to finish with success. Once he began to speak; and found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson, who was at the opposite end of the table and did not perceive his attempt. "Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of the company," says Boswell, "Goldsmith in a passion threw down his hat, looking angrily at Johnson, and exclaiming in a bitter tone *Take it.*" At this moment, Toplady being about to speak, and Johnson uttering some sound which led Goldsmith to think he was again beginning, and was taking the words from Toplady, "Sir," he exclaimed, venting his own envy and spleen, according to Boswell, under the pretext of supporting another person, "the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour; pray allow us now to hear him." "Sir," replied Johnson sternly, "I was not interrupting the gentleman. I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are impertinent."† Goldsmith made no reply, but continued in the company for some time. He then left for the club.

But it is very possible he had to call at Covent-garden on his

\* I made the mistake in former editions of calling Mr. Toplady also a dissenter, whereas the Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, vicar of Broad Hembury in Devon, was a clergyman of the Church of England, who took the Calvinistic side in the controversy with Wesley and others on Predestination, was a writer of hymns that have been very popular, and the author of some works in high repute both with churchmen and dissenters of the Calvinistic Evangelical school. I owe this correction to an esteemed correspondent.

† *Boswell*, iii. 292-7. One may illustrate this and other things of the same kind in Johnson by a remark he let fall not many months later when talking to Boswell about Beattie. "Treating your adversary with respect is giving him an advantage to which he is not entitled. . . Sir, treating your adversary with respect is striking soft in a battle." (iv. 20.) No distinction is made, the reader perceives, between a respectable and a disreputable adversary.

way, and that for this, and not for Boswell's reason, he had taken his hat early. The actor who so assisted him in Young Marlow, Lee Lewes, was taking his benefit this seventh of May; and, for an additional attraction, Goldsmith had written him the "occasional" epilogue I formerly mentioned, which Lewes spoke in the character of Harlequin, and which was repeated (for the interest then awakened by the writer's recent death) at his benefit in the following year.\* But if he called at the theatre, his stay was brief; for when Johnson, Langton, and Boswell appeared in Gerrard-street,† they found him sitting with Burke, Garrick, and other members, "silently brooding," says Boswell, "over Johnson's reprimand to him after dinner." Johnson saw how matters stood, and saying aside to Langton "I'll make Goldsmith forgive me," called to him in a loud voice, "Doctor Goldsmith! something passed to-day where you and I dined: I ask your pardon." To which Goldsmith at once "placidly" answered, "It must be much from you, sir, that I take ill." And so at once, Boswell adds, the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldy rattled away as usual.

The whole story is to Goldsmith's honour. Not so did the reverend Percy or the reverend Warton show Christian temper,

\* It is always printed last in the editions of the *Poems*. And let me here remark how strange it is that Mr. Lee Lewes should have published in 1805, at a time when Goldsmith's fame was thoroughly established, four volumes of anecdotes about himself and his theatrical life, in which, while all sorts of insignificant things and persons are treated at tedious length, not a single syllable appears of the writer's connection with Goldsmith. That name is not once mentioned for which alone we now take an interest in Mr. Lee Lewes's name!

† It will be right that I should quote their talk about Goldsmith, as Johnson, Langton, and he went along. Boswell's sudden ambition to rival Addison's *mot* by a pompous imitation of it is highly characteristic. "In our way to the club to-night, when I regretted that Goldsmith would, upon every occasion, endeavour to shine, by which he often exposed himself, Mr. Langton observed that he was not like Addison, who was content with the fame of his writings, and did not aim also at excellency in conversation for which he found himself unfit: and that he said to a lady who complained of his having talked little in company, 'Madam, I have but ninepence in ready money, but I can draw for a thousand pounds.' I observed that Goldsmith had a great deal of gold in his cabinet, but, not content with that, was always taking out his purse. JOHNSON: 'Yes, Sir, and that so often an empty purse!'" iii. 300.



when the one was called insolent and the other uncivil;\* not so could the courtly-bred Beauclerc or the country-bred Dr. Taylor restrain themselves, when Johnson roared *them* down; not <sup>1773.</sup> so the gentle Langton and unruffled Reynolds, when even they <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> were called intemperate; not so the historic Robertson, though comparing such rebukes of the righteous to excellent oil which breaks not the head, nor the philosophic Burke, drily correcting the historian with a suggestion of "oil of vitriol;" not so, in short, with one single submissive exception, any one of the constant victims to that forcible spirit and impetuosity of manner, which, as the submissive victim admits, spared neither sex nor age.

But Boswell was not content that the scene should have passed as it did. Two days after, he called to take leave of Goldsmith before returning to Scotland, and seems to have chafed, with his meddling loquacity, what remained of a natural soreness of feeling. He dwells accordingly with great unction, in his book, on the "jealousy and envy" which broke out at this interview,† from a man who otherwise possessed so many "most amiable "qualities;" ‡ and yet, in the same passage, is led to make the avowal that he does not think Goldsmith had more envy in him than other people. "Upon another occasion, when Goldsmith "confessed himself to be of an envious disposition, I contended "with Johnson that we ought not to be angry with him, he was "so candid in owning it. 'Nay, sir,' said Johnson, 'we must be "angry that a man has such a superabundance of an odious "quality, that he cannot keep it within his own breast, but it "boils over.' In my opinion, however, Goldsmith had not more "of it than other people have, but only talked of it freely." He pursues the same subject later, where, in answer to a remark

\* *Boswell*, vii. 111; and for allusions following, 292-7, vi. 289, and vii. 259-60.

† The *Tatler* already had originated Sheridan's "damned good-natured friend" in the remark, "There is never wanting some good-natured person to send a man an account of what he has no mind to hear," or Boswell might have sat to the wit for that celebrated creation.

‡ *Boswell*, iii. 303-4.

from Johnson about this envy of their friend, he defends him by observing that he owned it frankly on all occasions ; and is thus met by Johnson. "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had so much envy, that he could not conceal it. He was so full of it, <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> that he overflowed. He talked of it, to be sure, often enough. "Now, sir, what a man avows, he is not ashamed to think ; though many a man thinks what he is ashamed to avow."\* Dr. Beattie in like manner informs us: "He was the only person I ever knew who acknowledged himself to be envious : "† to which let me add that Tom Davies makes a similar remark for himself, when he says, in a passage of his *Life of Garrick* which Johnson saw and approved before publication, that he never knew any man but one who had the honesty and courage to confess that he had envy in him, and that man was Dr. Johnson. Such are the inconsistencies in which we find ourselves on this subject ; and which really reach their height when, in reply to some obstinate recurrence of Boswell to the same eternal theme, Johnson goes so far as to say that vanity was so much the motive of Goldsmith's virtues as well as vices that it prevented his being a social man, so that "he never exchanged mind with you."‡ As I have repeatedly illustrated in the course of this book, Goldsmith's faults lay on the ultra-social and communicative side. He was but too ready on all occasions to pour out whatever his mind contained, nor does it seem, as far as we may judge, that he was impatient of receiving like confidences from others.

But his last interview with Boswell remains to be described. As the latter enlarged on his having secured Johnson for a visit to the Hebrides in the autumn (an achievement which elsewhere he compared to that of a dog which had got hold of a large piece of meat, and run away with it to a corner where he might devour it in peace, without any fear of others taking it from him),§ Goldsmith interrupted him with the impatient remark that "he would be a dead weight for me to carry, and that I should never be

\* *Boswell*, vii. 108.

† *Boswell*, vi. 155.

† *Forbes*, iii. 49.

§ *Id.* iv. 227-8, and see vi. 139.

"able to lug him along through the Highlands and Hebrides." Nor, Boswell continues, was he patiently allowed to enlarge upon Johnson's wonderful abilities; for here Goldsmith broke in <sup>1778.</sup> with that exclamation, "Is he like Burke, who winds into a <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> "subject like a serpent?" which drew forth the triumphant answer, "But Johnson is the Hercules who strangled serpents in "his cradle,"\* seldom equalled for its ludicrous inaptness by even Boszzy himself. All which would be amusing enough, if it had rested there; but, straight from the Temple, Boswell took himself to Fleet-street, and with the repetition of what had passed, his common habit, no doubt revived Johnson's bitterness. For this had not wholly subsided even a week or two later, when, on Mrs. Thrale alluding to his future biographer, he asked, "And who will be my "biographer, do you think?" "Goldsmith, no doubt," replied Mrs. Thrale; "and he will do it the best among us." "The dog "would write it best, to be sure," was Johnson's half-jesting half-bitter rejoinder, "but his particular malice towards me, and general disregard of truth, would make the book useless to all and "injurious to my character."†

Uttered carelessly enough, no doubt ("nobody, at times, talks "more laxly than I do" he said candidly to Boswell), and with small thought that his gay little mistress would turn authoress, and put it in a book! What Mrs. Thrale herself adds, indeed, would hardly have been said, if Johnson had spoken at all seriously. "Oh! as to that, said I, we should all fasten upon him, and force "him to do you justice; but the worst is, the doctor does not *know* "your life." Let such things, in short, be taken always with the wise comment which Johnson himself supplied to them, in an invaluable remark of his ten years later. "I am not an uncandid nor am "I a severe man. I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest; and "people are apt to believe me serious. However, I am more "candid than I was when I was younger. As I know more of "mankind, I expect less of them; and am ready now to call a

\* Boswell, iii. 302-4.

† Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 31-2. The remark was made in July 1773

"man a good man upon easier terms than I was formerly."\* He loved Goldsmith when he so spoke of him, and had no doubt of Goldsmith's affection; but he spoke with momentary bitterness; of the "something after death," whether a biography <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> or matter more serious, he never spoke patiently; and no man's quarrels, at all times, had in them so much of lovers' quarrels. "Sir," he said to Boswell with a faltering voice, when Beauclerc was in his last illness, "I would walk to the extremity of the diameter of the earth to save Beauclerc:" yet with no one more bitterly than Beauclerc did he altercation in moments of difference. Nor was his fervent tribute, "the earth, sir, does not bear a worthier man than Bennet Langton," less sincere, because one of his most favourite topics of talk to Boswell was the little weaknesses of their worthy friend.

And now, approaching as I am to the conclusion of my book, let me take the opportunity of saying, that, with an admiration for Boswell's biography confirmed and extended by my late repeated study of it, I am more than ever convinced that not a few of those opinions of Johnson's put forth in it which appear most repulsive or extravagant, would for the most part lose that character if Boswell had accompanied them always with the provocation or incitement under which they were delivered. Certainly he does not always do this, any more than he is careful at all times to distinguish when things are said in irony or jest. To illustrate my meaning, a short passage may be quoted from a conversation in which Boswell appears to have fretted and vexed Johnson by trying to prove that the highest sort of praise might yet, in particular circumstances, be resorted to without the suspicion of exaggeration. "Thus," he continued, "one might say of Mr. Edmund Burke, he 'is a very wonderful man;' to which Johnson retorted, "No, 'sir, you would not be safe, if another man had a mind perversely 'to contradict. He might answer, 'Where is all the wonder?

\* *Boswell*, viii. 233. The other remark on his own laxity was made upon Boswell showing him a rather questionable opinion attributed to him in a magazine, which he admitted that he might perhaps have said.



“ ‘ Burke is, to be sure, a man of uncommon abilities ; with a great quantity of matter in his mind, and a great fluency of language  
 “ ‘ in his mouth. But we are not to be stunned and astonished  
 1773. “ ‘ by him.’ So you see, sir, even Burke would suffer, not  
 Æt. 45. “ ‘ from any fault of his own, but from your folly.’ ” \* This last remark is surely the real clue to a great deal that offends against good taste in Boswell's extraordinary book. Men and things, and poor Goldsmith and his affairs very prominently among both, over and over again “suffer not from any fault of their own,” but from a teasing, pertinacious, harassing, and foolish way of dragging them forward. That excellent saying of Mrs. Thrale's formerly quoted, in which she tells us that to praise anything, even what he liked, extravagantly, was generally displeasing to Johnson, was never sufficiently considered by Boswell. This indeed was the mistake he most often made ; and hence his frequent confession that it was not improbable that if one had taken the other side Johnson “might have reasoned differently.” † The honest truth was that, so long as, by any sort or kind of pestering, or of excitement, he elicited one of Johnson's peculiarities, the more harsh or decisive the better, he did not care what or who might be sacrificed in the process. If he could ever discover a tender place, on that he was sure to fix himself ; and any hesitation or misgiving about a particular subject was pretty sure to be turned the wrong way, if he proceeded to meddle with it. In regard to Goldsmith, too, the mere prevalence of a suspicion that he would be biographer to his hero, was of course discomforting ; and there is doubtless some truth in Sir Walter Scott's suggestion that “rivalry for “Johnson's good graces” in regard to this possible point of contention, might account for many of the impressions which Boswell, who was by nature neither an ill-tempered nor an unjust man, received from such intercourse as he had with Johnson's earlier and older friend.

\* *Boswell*, viii. 57-8.

† *Ib.* iii. 112.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### DRUDGERY AND DEPRESSION.

1773.

THE first volume of the *Grecian History* appears to have been finished by Goldsmith soon after Boswell left London, and Griffin, on behalf of the "trade," was then induced to make further advances. An agreement dated on the 22nd of June, states <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> 250*l.* as the sum agreed and paid for the two volumes; but from this payment had doubtless been deducted some part of the heavy debt for which the author was already in arrear. The rest of that debt it seemed hopeless to satisfy by mere drudgery of his own, never more than doubtfully rewarded at best; and the idea now first occurred to poor Goldsmith of a work that he might edit, for which he might procure contributions from his friends, and in which, without any great labour of the pen, the mere influence of his name and repute might suffice to bring a liberal return.\* It

\* This project, and the general condition and habits of Goldsmith at the time, are thus described in the *Percy Memoir*, p. 112-3. "He had engaged all his literary friends, and the members of the club to contribute articles, each on the subject in which he excelled; so that it could not but have contained a great assemblage of excellent disquisitions. He accordingly had prepared a Prospectus, in which, as usual, he gave a luminous view of his design; but his death unfortunately prevented the execution of the work. He was subject to severe fits of the strangury, owing probably to the intemperate manner in which he confined himself to the desk, when he was employed in his compilations, often indeed for several weeks successively without taking exercise. On such occasions he usually hired lodgings in some farm-house a few miles from London, and wrote without cessation till he had finished his task. He then carried his copy to the bookseller, received his compensation, and gave himself up, perhaps for months without interruption, to the gaieties, amusements, and societies of London."

is pleasant to find Garrick helping him in this. "Dear sir," writes Goldsmith to him on the 10th of June, "To be thought of

"by you, obliges me; to be served by you, still more. It  
 1773. "makes me very happy to find that Doctor Burney thinks  
 A.M. 45. "my scheme of a *Dictionary* useful; still more that he will be  
 "so kind as to adorn it with anything of his own. I beg you,  
 "also, will accept my gratitude for procuring me so valuable an  
 "acquisition. I am, dear sir, Your most affectionate servant,  
 "OLIVER GOLDSMITH."\* Garrick had induced Dr. Burney to promise a paper on Music for the scheme, which was that of a *Popular Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*.

In exertions with a view to this project, and in other persevering labours of the desk, the autumn came on. "Here," he said exultingly to Cradock, on the latter entering his chambers one morning, "are some of my best prose writings. I have been  
 "hard at work ever since midnight, and I desire you to examine  
 "them. They are intended for an introduction to a body of arts  
 "and sciences."† Cradock thought them excellent indeed, but for other admiration they have unluckily not survived. With these proofs of application, anecdotes also of carelessness, of the disposition which makes so much of the shadow as well as sunshine of the Irish character, as usual alternate; and Cradock relates that, on one occasion, he and Percy met by appointment in the Temple, at Goldsmith's special request, and found him gone away to Windsor after leaving an earnest entreaty (with which they complied) that they would complete for him a half-finished proof of his *Animated Nature*, which lay upon his desk.‡ His once trim chamber had then fallen into grievous disorder. Expensive volumes, which, as he says in his preface to the book just named, had sorely taxed his scanty resources, lay scattered about

\* Madame D'Arblay's *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, i. 272-3. "My dear Doctor," writes Garrick, enclosing this letter, "I have sent you a letter from Dr. Goldsmith. "He is proud to have your name among the elect. Love to all your fair ones. Ever  
 "yours, D. Garrick."

† Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 235.

‡ *Ibid.* iv. 285.

the tables, and tossing on the floor.\* But of books he had never been careful. Hawkins relates that when engaged in his historical researches about music, Goldsmith told him some curious things one night at the club, which, having asked him to <sup>1773.</sup> reduce to writing, he promised that he would, and desired <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> Hawkins to call at his chambers for them; when, on the latter doing so, he stepped into a closet and tore out of a printed book six leaves, containing the facts he had mentioned. The carelessness, however, was not of books only. Such money as he had might be seen lying exposed in drawers, to which his "occasional "man-servant" would resort as a mere matter of course, for means to pay any small bill that happened to be applied for; and on a visitor once pointing out the danger of this, "What, my dear "friend," exclaimed Goldsmith, "do you take Dennis for a thief?" One John Eyles had lately replaced Dennis, and was become inheritor of the too tempting confidences reposed in his predecessor, at the time of Percy's visit to the Temple.

The incident of that visit, I may add, shows us how fleeting the *Rowley* dispute had been; and it was followed by a mark of renewed confidence from Goldsmith, which may also show the fitful despondency under which he was labouring at this time. He asked Percy to be his biographer; told him he should leave him his papers; dictated several incidents of his life to him; and gave him a number of letters and manuscript materials, which were not afterwards so carefully preserved as they might have been.† There

\* I refer the reader to the auctioneer's catalogue of Goldsmith's furniture and books, which I print, by Mr. Murray's permission, from the very scarce original now in his possession. See Appendix B to this volume.

† See Appendix A to this volume. Either Edmund Malone was a sinner in the same way (though, as he would have us believe, through *too much* care), or the Bishop lost also some papers intrusted to him by Malone. "I have a strong recollection," he writes to Percy (5th June, 1802) "of having got, I know not how, some "verses addressed by Goldsmith to a lady going to Ranelagh, or going to a masque-rade, and of having given them to you for insertion; but I do not find them any-where." (He is referring to the edition of the *Miscellaneous Works* just then published with the *Percy Memoir* prefixed.) The Bishop appears in his answer to have convinced him that the missing verses had never reached him; and in a second letter (July 20, 1802) Malone adds, "I cannot recollect what I have done "with the unpublished verses of Goldsmith, nor from whom I got them. They



is no doubt that his spirits were now unusually depressed and uncertain, and that his health had become visibly impaired. Even his temper failed him with his servants; and bursts of <sup>1773.</sup> passion, altogether strange in him, showed the disorder of <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> his mind. These again he would repent and atone for on the instant; so that his laundress, Mary Ginger, used to contend with John Eyles which of them on such occasions should first fall in his way, knowing well the profitable kindness that would follow the intemperate reproof. From such as now visited him, even men he had formerly most distrusted, he made little concealment of his affairs. "I remember him when, in his chambers in the "Temple," says Cumberland who had called upon him there, "he showed me the beginning of his *Animated Nature*; it was "with a sigh, such as genius draws, when hard necessity diverts "it from its bent, to drudge for bread, and talk of birds and beasts "and creeping things, which Pidcock's showman would have done "as well. Poor fellow, he hardly knew an ass from a mule; nor "a turkey from a goose, but when he saw it on the table."\* Cumberland had none of the necessities of the drudge, and his was not the life of the author militant. That *he* could eat his daily bread without performing some daily task to procure it, was a fact he made always very obvious, and was especially likely to impress on any drudge he was visiting. "You and I have very "different motives for resorting to the stage. I write for money, "and care little about fame," † said Goldsmith sorrowfully. His

"remained for a long while folded in the Irish edition of his works, and are there "no longer; so I suppose I have deposited them somewhere so *safely* that I shall "never find them. One often loses things in this way, by too much care."

\* *Memoirs*, i. pp. 352-3. The reader has had the opportunity of appreciating the value of such remarks.

† *Ibid.* p. 366. Many passages in the *Animated Nature* show this melancholy tone; and one fancies it might be with something of a lingering personal allusion he stopped amid the fables recorded by Aldrovandus (iv. 403), to apostrophise "that "great and good man" as one who "was frequently imposed upon by the designing "and the needy;" whose unbounded curiosity drew round him people of every kind, "and whose generosity was as ready to reward falsehood as truth. . . . Poor Aldrovandus! " . . . he little thought of being reduced at last to want bread, to feel the ingratitude "of his country, and to die a beggar in a public hospital!" For another somewhat

own distress, too, had made even more acute, at this time, his sensibility to the distress of others. He was playing whist one evening at Sir William Chambers's, when, at a critical point of the game, he flung down his cards, ran hastily from the room into the street, as hastily returned, resumed his cards, and went on with the game. He had heard an unfortunate woman attempting to sing in the street; and so did her half-singing, half-sobbing, pierce his heart, that he could not rest till he had relieved her, and sent her away. The other card-players had been conscious of the woman's voice, but not of the wretchedness in its tone which had so affected Goldsmith.\*

It occurred to some friends to agitate the question of a pension for him. Wedderburne had talked somewhat largely, in his recent defence of Johnson's pension, of the resolve of the ministry no longer to restrict the bounty of the crown by political considerations, provided there was "distinction in the literary world, and the prospect of approaching distress." No living writer now answered these conditions better than Goldsmith; yet application on his behalf was met by firm refusal. His talent was not a marketable one. "A late nobleman who had been a member of

similar and very striking passage on Reaumur, see v. 213-4. "It was in vain," exclaims Goldsmith, "that this poor man's father dissuaded him from what the world considered as a barren pursuit; it was in vain that an habitual disorder, brought on by his application, interrupted his efforts; it was in vain that mankind treated him with ridicule while living, as they suffered his works to remain long unprinted and neglected when dead: still the Dutch philosopher went on," &c.

\* I quote the version of this touching anecdote exactly as it appeared in the periodicals of the time: "This truly eccentric, yet amiable, character, was one evening at a card party in the house of the late *Sir William Chambers*, Berners-street. The game, at the table to which he sat down, was *whist*: the set was, *Lady Chambers*, *Baretti*, *Sir William*, and the *Doctor*. In a very important period of this contemplative game, when the fate of the rubber depended upon a single point, Goldsmith, to the astonishment of every one, gave a sudden start, threw down his hand of cards, flew out of the room, and into the street. He was back again almost in an instant. *Sir William*, fearful that he had been ill, said, 'Where the deuce have you been in such a hurry, Goldsmith?' 'I'll tell you,' he replied; 'as I was deeply engaged, and pondering over my cards, my attention was attracted from them by the voice of a female in the street, who was singing and sobbing at the same time: so I flew down to relieve her distress; for I could not be quiet myself until I had quieted her.'" *Europ. Mag.* lv. 443.

“several administrations,” says poor Smollett, “observed to me that one good writer was of more importance to the Government than twenty placemen in the House of Commons :” but the <sup>1773.</sup> good writer was to have also the qualities of the placeman, <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> to enable them to recognise his importance, or induce him to accept their livery. Let me give a pertinent instance of this, on which some light has been lately thrown. Few things could be adduced more characteristic of the time, or of that low valuation of literature among what were called the distinguished and well-bred people to the illustration of which I have devoted so many pages of this biography, than a memorial in favour of the most worthless of hack-partisans, Shebbeare, which will be found in the *Grenville Correspondence*, and which absolutely availed to obtain for him his pension of 200*l.* a year. It is signed by two peers, two baronets, seven county members, four members for towns, and the members for the City and the University of Oxford ; and it asks for a pension on two grounds. The first is “that he may be enabled to pursue that laudable *inclination which he has* of manifesting his zeal for the service of His Majesty and his Government :” in other words, that a rascal should be bribed to support a corrupt administration : and the second is that the memorialists “*have been informed* that the late Doctor Thomson, Pemberton, Johnson, Smollett, Hume, Hill, Mallet, and others have had either pensions or places granted them as Men of Letters,” or they would not have “taken the liberty” to intercede for Shebbeare.\* Shebbeare and Johnson ! Smollett and Mallet ! Hume and Hill ! how exquisite the impartiality of regard and estimation ! It was false, too ; for poor Smollett’s name never appeared in the pension list at all, and Johnson, on his appearance in it at Michaelmas quarter 1763, had no worthier neighbour than “Mr. Wight, Ward’s chymist, one quarter, 75*l.* ;” which name follows “Mr. Samuel Johnson, one quarter, 75*l.*”

It might seem almost incredible to assert, but it is the simple fact, that the most distinguished public recognition of literary

\* *Grenville Cor.* ii. 271.

merit made at this time was to Arthur Murphy and to Hugh Kelly, the latter having been for some years in Government pay : but Goldsmith had declined the overtures which these men accepted. Such political feeling as he had shown in his *English History*, it is true, was decidedly anti-aristocratic : but though, <sup>1773.</sup>  
<sub>Æt. 45.</sub> with this, he may have exhibited a strong leaning to the monarchy, he had yet neither the merit, which with the King was still a substitute for most other merit, of being a Scotchman ; nor even the merit, which might have done something to supply that defect, of concealing his general contempt for the ministers and politicians of the day. It requires no great stretch of fancy to suppose that such a remark as this of Jack Lofty in the *Good-natured Man* would not be extremely pleasant in great places. “ Sincerely, don’t you pity us poor creatures in affairs ? Thus it is eternally : solicited for places here, teased for pensions there, and courted everywhere. I know you pity me. Yes, I see you do . . . . ” “ Waller, Waller, is he of the house ? . . . Oh, a modern poet ! ” “ We men of business despise the moderns ; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters, but not for us. Why now, here I stand, that know nothing of books ; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp-act, or a jaghire, I can talk by two hours without feeling the want of them.” Goldsmith could not have drawn a more exact portrait of the official celebrities, the ministers of state, of his time ; and they rewarded him as he probably expected.

While the matter was still in discussion, there had come up to London the Scotch professor, Beattie, who had written the somewhat trumpery *Essay on Truth* to which I formerly adverted ; and which had eagerly been caught at, with avowed exaggerations of praise, as a mere battery of assault against the Voltaire and Hume philosophy. The object, such as it was, was a good one ; and though it could not make Beattie a tolerable philosopher, it made him, for the time, a very perfect social idol. He was supposed to have “ avenged ” insulted Christianity. “ He is so caressed, and



"invited, and treated, and liked, and flattered by the great, that I "can see nothing of him," says Johnson.\* "Every one," says Mrs. Thrale, "loves Doctor Beattie but Goldsmith, who says <sup>1773.</sup> "he cannot bear the sight of so much applause as we all be- <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> "stow upon him. Did he not tell us so himself, who could "believe he was so amazingly ill-natured?" Telling it, one half called him ill-natured; and the other half, absurd. He certainly had the objection all to himself. "I have been but once at the club "since you left England," writes Beauclerc to Lord Charlemont; "we were entertained as usual by Doctor Goldsmith's absurdity. "Mr. V[esey] can give you an account of it."† Some harangue against Beattie, very probably; for even the sarcastic Beau went with the rest of the "ale-house in Gerrard-street," as he calls the club, in support of the anti-infidel philosopher. What most vexed Goldsmith, however, was the adhesion of Reynolds. It was the only grave difference that had ever been between them; and it is honourable to the poet that this should have arisen on the only incident in the painter's life which has somewhat tarnished his fame. Reynolds accompanied Beattie to Oxford, partook with him in an honorary doctorship of civil law, and on his return painted his fellow-doctor in Oxonian robes with the *Essay on Truth* under his arm, and at his side the angel of truth overpowering and chasing away the demons of infidelity, sophistry, and falsehood; the last represented by the plump and broad-backed figure of Hume, the second by the lean and piercing face of Voltaire, and the first bearing something of a remote resemblance to Gibbon.

\* In his enthusiasm he forgot for the time the rule he repeats so often. "You "know, sir, that no Scotchman publishes a book, or has a play brought upon the "stage, but there are five hundred people ready to applaud him." *Boswell*, viii. 177.

† Letter dated from Muswell Hill, 5th July, 1773. *Hardy's Life of Lord Charle-  
mont*, 163. It is pleasant to find, from this and other letters, how such men as  
Beauclerc continued to enjoy the society of the club. "Mr. Vesey will tell you that  
"our club consists of the greatest men in the world, consequently you see there is a  
"good and patriotic reason for you to return to England in the winter. Pray make  
"my best respects to Lady Charlemont, and Miss Hickman, and tell them I wish  
"they were at this moment sitting at the door of our ale-house in Gerrard-street."  
*See Piozzi Letters*, i. 186.

"It very ill becomes a man of your eminence and character," said Goldsmith to Sir Joshua, and the spirited rebuke will outlast the silly picture, "to debase so high a genius as Voltaire before so mean  
 "a writer as Beattie. Beattie and his book will be forgotten <sup>1773.</sup>  
 "in ten years, while Voltaire's fame will last for ever. Take <sup>Æt. 45.</sup>  
 "care it does not perpetuate this picture, to the shame of such a man  
 "as you."\* Reynolds persisted, notwithstanding the protest; but was incapable of any poor resentment of it. He produced at Goldsmith's suggestion, this same year, his painting of *Ugolino*, founded on a head not originally painted for that subject, but which had struck Burke as well as Goldsmith to be eminently suited to it; and their friendship, based as it was on sympathies connected with art † as well as on strong private regard, knew no abatement. Beattie himself, however, was full of resentment. He called his critic a poor fretful creature, eaten up with affectation and envy; yet he liked many things in his genius, he said, and (writing a year later, when he had no more to fear from him) was "sorry to find last  
 "summer that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to  
 "stand between him and his interest."‡ The allusion was to the pension; for which it was well known that Goldsmith was an unsuccessful solicitor, and which had been granted unsolicited to Beattie. The King had sent for him, praised his *Essay*, and given him two hundred a year. Johnson welcomed the news in the Hebrides with his most vehement expression of delight, *Oh, brave we!* Though, seeing he had quoted his favourite *Traveller* but three days before till the "tear started to his eye," he might

\* *Northcote*, i. 300. Cunningham's *Life of Reynolds*, 269-70. "There is only a figure covering his face with his hands" wrote Reynolds himself to Beattie, "which they may call Hume, or anybody else; it is true it has a tolerable broad back. As for Voltaire, I intended he should be one of the group." See Forbes's *Beattie*, ii. 42; and for *Beattie's* description of his sitting to Reynolds, i. 361, and 377.

† Beechey's *Memoirs of Reynolds*, i. 197. For proof, I may refer to the witty stroke already quoted (318) from the *Vicar of Wakefield*, where George Primrose humorously sketches in two rules the whole art of the *cognoscenti* who were the very plagues of Reynolds's existence. The passage was, and deserves to have been, one of Mr. Rogers's especial favourites.

‡ Letter in Forbes's *Life* (1807), ii. 69. "Everybody rejoices that the Doctor will get his pension," writes Mrs. Thrale (*Letters*, i. 186).

have thought somewhat of his other unpensioned friend, and clapped his hands less loudly.\*

That the failure of all hope in this direction should a little  
 1773.  
 Æt. 45. have soured and changed the unlucky petitioner, will hardly  
 provoke surprise. He had hitherto taken little interest, and  
 no part, in politics; and his inclination, as far as it may be traced, had  
 never been to the ministerial side. But he seems no longer to have  
 scrupled to avow a decisive sympathy with the opposition; and  
 there is as little reason to doubt that at this time he was building  
 frail hopes of some appointment through Lord Shelburne's interest.  
 His personal knowledge of that able but wayward statesman gives  
 some colour to the assertion; and I have found in a magazine  
 published a few years after Goldsmith's death a distinct statement  
 confirming it, by one who evidently knew him well, and who adds  
 that "the expectation contributed to involve him, and he often  
 "spoke with great asperity of his dependence on what he called  
 "moonshine." Feeble as the light was, however, there are other  
 proofs of his having followed it in these last melancholy months of  
 his life. Lord Shelburne's member and protégé, Townshend, was  
 at this time Lord Mayor of London; and by his fiery liberalism,  
 and really bold resolution, quite careless of those "Malagrida"  
 taunts against his patron with which the sarcasm of *Junius* had  
 supplied ministerial assailants, was now exasperating the Court  
 to the last degree. Yet Goldsmith did not hesitate to praise the  
 "patriotic magistrate," and to avow that he had done so. "Gold-  
 "smith, the other day," writes Beauclerc to Lord Charlemont,  
 "put a paragraph into the newspapers in praise of Lord Mayor  
 "Townshend. The same night we happened to sit next to Lord

\* The passage which so strongly moved him was the character of the English, "the  
 "lords of human kind," which Hawkins professes also to have heard him repeat  
 with wonderful energy and feeling, until his eyes filled. But Boswell's *Tour to the  
 Hebrides* came out before Hawkins's *Life*, and the last is very likely to have copied  
 the first. "After a good night's rest, we breakfasted at our leisure. We talked  
 "of Goldsmith's *Traveller*, of which Dr. Johnson spoke highly; and while I was  
 "helping him on with his great coat, he repeated from it the character of the  
 "British nation, which he did with such energy that the tear started into his eye."  
*Boswell*, v. 85. And see *ibid.* 105.

"Shelburne, at Drury-lane. I mentioned the circumstance of the paragraph to him, and he said to Goldsmith that he hoped he had mentioned nothing about *Malagrida* in it. 'Do you know,' answered Goldsmith, 'that I never could conceive the <sup>1773.</sup> <sub>Æt. 45.</sub> reason why they call you *Malagrida*, for *Malagrida* was a 'very good sort of man.' You see plainly what he meant to say; but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says that this story is a picture of Goldsmith's whole life."\*

Ah! so it might seem to men whose whole life had been a holiday. No slavish drudgery, no clownish traits, no scholarly loneliness had befallen them; and how to make allowance in others for disadvantages never felt by ourselves, is still the great problem for all of us. Poor Goldsmith's blunder was only a false emphasis. He meant that he wondered *Malagrida*, being the name of a good sort of a man, should be used as a term of reproach. But his whole life was a false emphasis, says Walpole. In his sense perhaps it was so. He had been emphatic throughout it, where Walpole had only been indifferent; and what to the wit and man of fashion had been a scene for laughter, to the poet and man of letters had been fraught with serious suffering. "Life is a comedy to those who think, and a tragedy to those who feel."† Democritus laughed, and Heraclitus wept.

Beaueclerc told Lord Charlemont in the same letter just quoted, that Goldsmith had written a prologue for Mrs. Yates which she was to speak that night at the Opera-house. "It is very good. You will see it soon in all the newspapers, otherwise I would send it to you." The newspapers have nevertheless been searched in vain for it, though it certainly was spoken; and it seems probable that Colman's friends had interfered to suppress it. Mrs. Yates had quarrelled with the Covent-garden manager; and one object of the "poetical exordium" which Goldsmith had thus written for her, was to put before that fashionable audience the injustice of her exclusion from the English theatre. He had great

\* Letter dated 20th Nov. 1773, in *Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont*, 177.

† *Letters to Mann*, ii. 63.



sympathy for Mrs. Yates, thinking her the first of English actresses ; and it is not wonderful that he should have lost all sympathy with

Colman. Their breach had lately widened more and more.

<sup>1773.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 45.</sup> Kenrick, driven from Drury-lane, had found refuge at the other house ; and, on the very night of Mrs. Yates's prologue, Colman suffered a new comedy, by that libeller of all his friends, to be decisively damned at Covent-garden. If Goldsmith could have withdrawn both his comedies upon this, he would probably have done it ; for at once he made an effort to remove the first to Drury-lane, which he now had the right to do. But Garrick insisted on his original objection to *Lofty* ; and justified it by reference to the comparative coldness with which, though strengthened by the zealous Lee Lewes in that part (Lewis had not yet assumed it), the comedy had been received during the run of *She Stoops to Conquer* in the summer.\* He would play the *Good-natured Man* if that objection could be obviated, not otherwise. Here the matter rested for a time ; the only result from what passed being Goldsmith's discovery that Newbery had failed to observe his promise in connection with the unpaid bill remaining in Garrick's hands. This was hardly generous ; since the copyright of *She Stoops to Conquer* had passed in satisfaction of all claims between them, and was already promising Newbery the ample profits beyond his debt which it subsequently realised. These are said to have amounted to upwards of three hundred pounds ; and the play was still so profitable after several years' sale, that when the book-sellers engaged Johnson for their first scheme of an edition and memoir the project was defeated by a dispute about the value of the copyright of *She Stoops to Conquer*.†

The other larger debt to "the trade" which had suggested to Goldsmith his project of a *Dictionary*, he had now no means of discharging but by hard, drudging, unassisted labour. His so favourite project, though he had obtained promises of co-operation from Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds, had been finally rejected. Davies, who represented the craft on the occasion, whose own

\* *Ante*, 104.

† See Appendix A to this volume.

business had not been very prosperous, and many of whose copyrights had already passed to Cadell, gives us the reason of their adverse decision. He says\* that though they had a very good opinion of the Doctor's abilities, yet they were startled at the bulk, importance, and expense of so great an undertaking, the fate of which was to depend upon the industry of a man with whose indolence of temper, and method of procrastination, they had long been acquainted. He adds, in further justification of the refusal, that upon every emergency half-a-dozen projects would present themselves to Goldsmith's mind, which, straightway communicated to the men they were to enrich, at once obtained him money on the mere faith of his great reputation: but the money was generally spent long before the new work was half finished, perhaps before it was begun; and hence arose continual expostulation and reproach on the one side, and much anger and vehemence on the other. Johnson described the same transactions, after all were over, in one of his emphatic sentences. "He had raised money "and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of "expense. But let not his frailties be remembered: he was a "very great man."†

\* *Life of Garrick*, ii. 167.

† *Boswell*, v. 189. Mr. Filby's account against Goldsmith, as it appeared at his death, showed him indebted in the sum of £79 14s. A portion of this (£48 4s. 6d.) was the unpaid balance of the preceding account. The latest half-year's supply, from July to December 1773 (including two suits, charged respectively £9 15s. 6d. and £5 13s.; and £2 19s. 3d. for a great-coat) amounted to £23 14s. 9d.; and there was an additional item of £7 14s. 9d. for a third suit, sent home a fortnight before his death. And having just quoted Johnson's mention of his extravagance, let me at least accompany this last appearance of poor Goldsmith's tailor's bills with his friend's excellent remark at Mrs. Thrale's one day, when somebody was denouncing "showy decorations of the human figure." "Oh," exclaimed Johnson, "let us not "be found, when our Master calls us, ripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the "spirit of contention from our souls and tongues! . . . Alas, Sir! a man who can- "not get to heaven in a green coat, will not find his way thither the sooner in a grey "one." Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 109-110.

## CHAPTER XIX.

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### THE CLOUDS STILL GATHERING.

1773.

THE cherished project, then, of the *Popular Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, the scheme on which Goldsmith had built so much, was an utter and quite hopeless failure ; and under the immediate pang of feeling this, the alteration of his first comedy for Garrick, even upon Garrick's own conditions, would seem to have suddenly presented itself as one of those "artifices of acquisition" which Johnson alleges against him. He wrote to the manager of Drury-lane. The letter has by chance survived, is obligingly communicated to me by its present possessor,\* and of the scanty collection so preserved is probably the worst composed and the worst written. As well in the manner as in the matter of it, the writer's distress is very painfully visible. It has every appearance, even to the wafer hastily thrust into it, of having been the sudden suggestion of necessity ; it is addressed, without date of time or place, to the Adelphi (where Garrick had lately purchased the centre house of the newly-built terrace) ; nor is it unlikely to have been delivered there by the messenger of a sponging-house. A fac-simile of its signature, which may be compared with Goldsmith's ordinary handwriting in a previous page, will show the writer's agitation, and perhaps account for the vague distraction of his grammar.

\* Then, Mr. Bullock of Islington ; but it has since been sold, and I do not know who now possesses it.

"MY DEAR SIR, Your saying you would play my *Good-Natured Man* makes me wish it. The money you advanced me upon Newbery's note I have the mortification to find is not yet paid, but he says he will in two or three days. What I mean by this letter is to lend me sixty pound for which I will give <sup>1773.</sup> you Newbery's note, so that the whole of my debt will be an hundred for which <sup>Æt. 43.</sup> you shall have Newbery's note as a security. This may be paid either from my alteration if my benefit should come to so much, but at any rate I will take care you shall not be a loser. I will give you a new character in my comedy and knock out Lofty which does not do, and will make such other alterations as you direct."

*I am yours  
Oliver Goldsmith.  
I beg an answer.*

The letter is indorsed in Garrick's handwriting as "*Goldsmith's parlaver.*" But though it would thus appear to have inspired little sympathy or confidence, and the sacrifice of Lofty had come too late and been too reluctant, Garrick's answer, begged so earnestly, was not unfavourable. He evaded the altered comedy; spoke of the new one already mentioned between them; and offered the money required on Goldsmith's own acceptance. He had proved the small worth of the security of one of Newbery's notes; though the publisher, with his experience of the comedy in hand, would doubtless have taken his chance of the renovated comedy. Poor Goldsmith's enthusiastic acknowledgment has also survived. Nor let it be thought he is acting unfairly to Newbery in the advice which accompanies his thanks. The publisher had frankly accepted the chances of a certain copyright, and had no right to wait the issue of those chances before he admitted the liability they imposed. The second note exhibits such manifest improvement in the writing as a sudden removal of a sore anxiety might occasion; but the writer's usual epistolary neatness is still absent. It is hastily folded up in three-cornered shape, is also sealed with wafer, and also indorsed by Garrick, "*Goldsmith's parlaver.*"



"MY DEAR FRIEND, I thank you! I wish I could do something to serve you. I shall have a comedy for you in a season or two at furthest that I believe will be worth your acceptance, for I fancy I will make it a fine thing. You shall 1773. have the refusal. I wish you would not take up Newbery's note but let Æt. 45. Waller" (probably a mistake for Wallis, Garrick's solicitor) "tease him, without however coming to extremities; let him haggle after him and he will get it. He owes it and will pay it. I'm sorry you are ill. I will draw upon you one month after date for sixty pound and your acceptance will be ready money, part of which I want to go down to Barton with. May God preserve my honest little man, for he has my heart. Ever, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Barton was a gleam of sunshine in his darkest days. There, if nowhere else, he could still strive to be, as in his younger time, "well when he was not ill, and pleased when he was not angry." It was the precious maxim of Reynolds, as it had been the selectest wisdom of Sir William Temple. Reynolds himself too, their temporary disagreement forgotten, gave him much of his society on his return: observing, as he said afterwards, the change in his manner; seeing how greatly he now seemed to need the escape from his own thoughts, and with what a look of distress he would suddenly start from the midst of social scenes he continued still passionately fond of, to go home and brood over his misfortunes. Only two more pictures really gay or bright remain in the life of Goldsmith. The last but one is of himself and Sir Joshua at Vauxhall.\* And not the least memorable figures in that sauntering

\* See *ante*, 254 and 316-7. "I am just going with Sir Joshua and Doctor Goldsmith to Vauxhall, which will be my first exit from home this day." Thomas Fitzmaurice to Garrick, 4th August, 1773. So it is, and continues to be, till all is over. "You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson," said the dull good man who had been a lad at college with him, and only accidentally met him after a separation of forty-nine years: "I have tried, too, in my time to be a philosopher; but I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in." *Boswell*, vii. 153. The reader sees that with Oliver Goldsmith, as with the good old Oliver Edwards, notwithstanding a necessity to be grave, cheerfulness is always breaking in. Nevertheless, he was probably not the worse philosopher for it. I may here perhaps appropriately add a reminiscence of the time vouchsafed us lately by one, who was now a girl of sixteen and afterwards a lady in waiting at court, who has described herself in girlhood as "amused by the buffoonery of Goldsmith," and gives an example of what entertained her. "Goldsmith was, I feel sure, very good-natured; and though neither his features, person, nor manners, had anything of grace to recommend them, his countenance, as far as I can recollect, was honest and open, and in his behaviour there was something easy and natural, removed from vulgarity no less than from affectation. His buffoonery, of which I have spoken, was a sort of childish playfulness, such as drinking off a glass of water reversed on the table without spilling a drop, and

crowd ; though it numbered princes and ambassadors then, and on its tide and torrent of fashion floated all the beauty of the time,



"similar tricks. On some occasion, I forget what" (perhaps one of his Vauxhall adventures), "he was told that he must wear a silk coat, and he purchased one "second-hand which had been a nobleman's, without observing that there was "visible on the breast a mark showing where a star had been." Miss Knight's *Autobiography*, i. 10-11.

and through its lighted avenues of trees glided cabinet ministers and their daughters, royal dukes and their wives, agreeable "young  
 "ladies and gentlemen of eighty-two," and all the red-heeled  
 1773.  
 1781. 45. macaronies; were those of the President, and the ancient history Professor, of the Royal Academy. A little later we trace Goldsmith from Vauxhall to the theatre, but any gaiety or enjoyment there is not so certain. Kelly had tried a fourth comedy (*The School for Wives*) under a feigned name, and with somewhat better success than its two immediate predecessors, though it lived but a few brief nights; and Beauclerc, who writes to tell Lord Charlemont of the round of pleasures Goldsmith and Joshua had been getting into, and which had prevented their attending the club, had told him also, but a few weeks before, that the new comedy was almost killing the poor poet with spleen. Yet it had been at Beauclerc's own house, and on the very night when the comedy was produced, that there shone forth the last laughter-moving picture I may dwell upon, in the chequered life now drawing quickly to its close.

Goldsmith had been invited to pass the day there, with the Garricks, Lord and Lady Edgumbe, and Horace Walpole; and there seems to have been some promise that Garrick and himself were to amuse the company in the evening with a special piece of mirth, the precise nature of which was not disclosed. But unfortunately the new comedy was coming on at Drury-lane, and soon after dinner the great actor fell into a fidget to get to the theatre, and all had to consent to wait his return. He went away at half-past five, and did not reappear till ten; the rest meanwhile providing what present amusement they could, to relieve the dulness of amusement in expectancy. The burden fell on Walpole; and "most thoroughly tired I was," says that fastidious gentleman, "as I knew I should be, I who hate the playing off a "butt." Why this task should have been so fatiguing in the special case, Horace proceeds to explain by a peculiarity in the butt referred to. "Goldsmith is a fool, the more wearing for  
 "having some sense."



However, all fatigue has an end, and at last Garrick came back from the play and the promised fun began. The player enveloped in a cloak took a seat; the poet sat down in his lap; and the cloak was so arranged as to cover the persons of both, except-<sup>1772.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 45.</sup> ing only Goldsmith's head and Garrick's arms, which seemed no longer to belong to separate bodies, but to be part of one and the same. Then, from the head, issued one of the gravest heroic speeches out of Addison's *Cato*, while the arms made nonsense of every solemn phrase by gestures the most extravagantly humorous and inappropriate. It is a never-failing effect of the broadest comedy, in the hands of very ordinary performers; and, with such action as Garrick's to burlesque the brogue and gravity of Goldsmith, must surely have been irresistible. The reader who has any experience of Christmas games will doubtless remember having given in his own time many a laugh to this "Signor Mufti," so personated on that Christmas night a hundred years ago. Mrs. Gwatkin, Sir Joshua Reynolds's younger niece, told also what she had seen of it as presented by the same actors, to Mr. Haydon, who related it in his diary long before Horace Walpole's anecdote was published. "The most delightful man," according to the old lady's account to Haydon, when she was gathering up the memories of her youth, "was Goldsmith. She saw him and Garrick keep "an immenso party laughing till they shrieked. Garrick sat on "Goldsmith's knee; a table-cloth was pinned under Garrick's "chin, and brought behind Goldsmith, hiding both their figures. "Garrick then spoke, in his finest style, Hamlet's speech to his "father's ghost. Goldsmith put out his hands on each side of the "cloth, and made burlesque action, tapping his heart, and putting "his hands to Garrick's head and nose, all at the wrong time." Here, the reader will observe, the actors had not only reversed their parts, but rejoiced in a better audience than they seem to have had at Beauclerc's.

For "how could one laugh," protests Horace Walpole after describing the thing as he saw it at Beauclerc's, "when one had "expected this for four hours?" So perhaps he and Beau-



clerc and Lord Edgecombe fell back once again on what this had interrupted, and closed up the night with the pleasanter mirth of playing off head and arms in a more mischievous game. "It  
 1773. "was the night of a new comedy," says Walpole, "called the  
 Æt. 45. *School for Wives*, which was exceedingly applauded, and "which Charles Fox says is execrable. Garrick had at least the chief "hand in it; and I never saw anybody in a greater fidget, nor "more vain when he returned." Here, then, with Garrick full of the glories of a new play, in some degree aimed against the broadly laughing school of Goldsmith; its author publicly reported to be Major (afterwards Sir William) Addington,\* and by some suspected to be Horace Walpole† himself; its first night's success already half threatening a sudden blight to the hard-won laurels of Young Marlow and Tony Lumpkin: here surely were all the materials of undeniable sport; and who will doubt that such a joke, if started, was in such company more eagerly enjoyed than the other more harmless Christmas game? or that the courtly and sarcastic Beauclerc was not only too happy in the opportunity it afterwards gave him of writing to his noble correspondent: "We have a new "comedy here which is good for nothing: bad as it is, however, "it succeeds very well, and almost killed Goldsmith with envy."‡

Cradock's account of what was really killing him is somewhat different from Beauclerc's, and will perhaps be thought more authentic. Although, according to the same letter of the Beau's, all the world but himself and a million of vulgar people were then in the country, Cradock had come up to town to place his wife under the care of a dentist, and had taken lodgings in Norfolk-street to be near his friend. He found Goldsmith much altered,

\* For a detailed account of this incident in Kelly's theatrical life, in which the trick formerly attempted (*ante*, 259) was repeated with better success, see Taylor's *Records*, i. 95-102. "Yes, we have stole a march on the patriots," exclaimed poor Kelly's wife exultingly, describing the reception of the comedy. Addington, who appeared as the author and attended all the rehearsals, was afterwards head of the Bow-street magistracy, and is not very correctly described (*Life and Writings of Kelly*, 4to. 1778, vii.) as "Mr. Justice Addington."

† See *Letters to Lady Ossory*, i. 120. The scene at Beauclerc's is described in the same volume, 112 (Dec. 14, 1773). See also Haydon's *Memoirs*, iii. 288.

‡ Hardy's *Life of Lord Charlemont*, 178.

he says ; at times, indeed, very low ; \* and he passed his mornings with him. He induced him once to dine in Norfolk-street ; but his usual cheerfulness had gone, "and all was forced." The idea occurred to Cradock that money might be raised by a special <sup>1773.</sup> subscription-edition of the *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, if <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> consent could be obtained from the holders of the copyrights. "Pray "do what you please with them," said Goldsmith sadly. But he rather submitted than encouraged, says Cradock ; and the scheme fell to the ground.† "Oh, sir," said two sisters named Gun, milliners, who lived at the corner of Temple-lane and were among Goldsmith's creditors, "sooner persuade him to let us work for him "gratis, than suffer him to apply to any other. We are sure that "he will pay us if he can." Cradock ends his melancholy narrative by expressing his conviction that, if Goldsmith had freely laid open all the debts for which he was then responsible, his zealous friends were so numerous that they would as freely have contributed to his relief. There is reason to presume as much of Reynolds, certainly ; and that he had even offered his aid. "I mean," Cradock adds, "here explicitly to assert only, that I believe he "died miserable, and that his friends were not entirely aware of "his distress."‡ Truly, it was to assert enough.

\* On one of these occasions Cradock describes himself repeating to Goldsmith some friendly and admiring sentences by Johnson, "which instantly proved a "cordial." i. 231.

† The poems were to be thoroughly revised, and the plan was discussed with Cradock at breakfast in the Temple. The alleged talk, however, contained nothing new, but rather a strange confusion of facts or statements already known ; which, I must add, is often to be observed in Mr. Cradock's so-called recollections. See *Memoirs*, iv. 287. See also i. 234-5.

‡ *Memoirs*, iv. 287. I subjoin from the same book (i. 385-6) Cradock's account of the last day on which he ever saw Goldsmith. "The day before I was to set out "for Leicestershire, I insisted upon his dining with us. He replied, 'I will ; but on "'one condition—that you will not ask me to eat anything.' . . . After dinner he "took some wine with biscuits ; but I was soon obliged to leave him for awhile, as I "had matters to settle for our next day's journey. On my return coffee was ready, ". . . and in the course of the evening he endeavoured to talk and remark, as usual, "but all was forced. He stayed till midnight, and I insisted on seeing him safe "home ; and we most cordially shook hands at the Temple-gate."

## CHAPTER XX.

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### RETALIATION.

1773—1774.

YET, before this delightful writer died, and from the depth of the distress in which his labours, struggles, and enjoyments left him, his genius flashed forth once more. Johnson had returned to <sup>1773.</sup> town after his three months' tour in the Hebrides; <sup>Æt. 45.</sup> parliament had again brought Burke to town; Richard Burke was in London on the eve of his return to Grenada; the old dining party had resumed their meetings at the St. James's coffee-house, and out of these meetings sprang *Retaliation*. More than one writer has professed to describe the particular scene from which it immediately arose, but their accounts are not always to be reconciled with what is certainly known. The poem itself however, with what was prefixed to it when published, sufficiently explains its own origin. What had formerly been abrupt and strange in Goldsmith's manners had now so visibly increased as to become matter of increased sport to such as were ignorant of its cause; and a proposition, made at one of the dinners when he was absent, to write a series of epitaphs upon him ("his country, "dialect, and person," were common themes of wit), was put in practice by several of the guests. The active aggressors appear to have been Garrick, Dr. Barnard, Richard Burke, and Caleb Whitefoord. Cumberland says he, too, wrote an epitaph; but it was complimentary and grave, closing with a line to the effect that "all

"mourn the poet, I lament the man;" and hence the grateful return he received. None were actually preserved (I mean of those that had given the provocation; the *ex post-facto* specimens are countless), but Garrick's; yet this will indicate what was doubtless, unless the exception of Cumberland be admitted, the tone of all.

1773.

Æt. 45.

"Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness call'd Noll,  
Who wrote like an angel but talk'd like poor Poll."

This is said to have been spoken at once, while the rest were read to Goldsmith when he next appeared at the St. James's coffee-house.\* "The Doctor was called on for Retaliation," says the friend who published the poem with that name, "and at their next meeting produced the following, which I think adds one leaf to his immortal wreath." It is possible he may have been asked to retaliate, but not likely; very certainly, however, the complete poem was not produced at the next meeting. It was unfinished when the writer died. But fragments of it, as written from time to time, appear to have been handed about, and read at the St. James's coffee-house; and it is pretty clear that not only the masterly lines on Garrick were known some time before the others, but that the opening verses, in which the proposed subjects of his pleasant satire are set forth as the various dishes in a banquet, were among the earliest so read. The course which the affair then took seems to have been, that the writers of the original epitaphs thought it prudent so far to protect themselves against an enemy more formidable than at first they had supposed they were provoking, by fresh epitaphs more carefully written, and in a more conciliatory spirit. Thus two sets of *jeux d'esprit* arose, of which only the last have been preserved; and this explains a contradiction apparent in almost all the accounts given by the actors in the affair, who would have us believe that verses evidently suggested by at least the opening lines of *Retaliation*, were no other than those which originally provoked and suggested that poem.

\* It was on the same occasion Burke perpetrated his pun of calling an epitaph "a grave epigram." Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 216.



Garrick's description, written as a preface to an intended collection of all the verses of the various writers, has been lately printed for the first time,\* and runs thus :

1774.

Æt. 46. "As the cause of writing the following printed poem called *Retaliation* has not yet been fully explained, a person concerned in the business begs leave to give the following just and minute account of the whole affair. At a meeting of a company of gentlemen, who were well known to each other, and diverting themselves, among many other things, with the peculiar oddities of Dr. Goldsmith, who never would allow a superior in any art from writing poetry down to dancœing a hornpipe, the Doctor with great eagerness insisted upon trying his epigrammatic powers with Mr. Garrick, and each of them was to write the other's epitaph. Mr. Garrick immediately said that his epitaph was finished, and spoke the following distich extempore" (as above given, and, except that "and" is substituted for "but" in the second line, as it was first printed in a memoir of Caleb Whitefoord in the 57th volume of the *European Magazine*): "Goldsmith, upon the company's laughing very heartily, grew very thoughtful, and either would not, or could not, write anything at that time: however, he went to work, and some weeks after produced the following printed poem called *Retaliation*, which has been much admired, and gone through several editions. The publick in general have been mistaken in imagining that this poem was written in anger by the Doctor; it was just the contrary; the whole on all sides was done with the greatest good humour; and the following poems in manuscript were written by several of the gentlemen on purpose to provoke the Doctor to an answer, which came forth at last with great credit to him in *Retaliation*."

Nothing is so certain as that the Doctor had already been provoked before the poems were so written, and that more especially the lines on Garrick himself had been handed about before Garrick's second elaborate epitaph was composed, though this also was finished before *Retaliation* assumed even the form in which it was left at its author's death. The account given by Cumberland does not greatly differ from Garrick's, but he describes the proposition to write extempore epitaphs as not directed against Goldsmith specifically, but embracing "the parties present." "Pen and ink," he says, "were called for, and Garrick off-hand wrote an epitaph "with a great deal of humour upon poor Goldsmith, who was the "first in jest, as he proved to be in reality, that we committed to "the grave. The Dean also gave him an epitaph, and Sir Joshua "illuminated the Dean's verses with a sketch of his bust in pen "and ink, inimitably caricatured. Neither Johnson nor Burke "wrote anything; and when I perceived Oliver was rather sore,

\* In Mr. Cunningham's Edition of the *Works*, i. 78.

“and seemed to watch me with that kind of attention which indicated his expectation of something in the same kind of burlesque with their’s, I thought it time to press the joke no further, and wrote a few couplets at a side table, which when I had <sup>1774.</sup> finished and was called upon by the company to exhibit, <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> Goldsmith with much agitation besought me to spare him, and I was about to tear them, when Johnson wrested them out of my hand, and in a loud voice read them at the table. I have now lost all recollection of them, and in fact they were little worth remembering, but as they were serious and complimentary, the effect they had upon Goldsmith was the more pleasing for being so entirely unexpected . . . At our next meeting he produced his epitaphs . . . As he had served up the company under the similitude of various sorts of meat, I had in the mean time figured them under that of liquors.\* . . Goldsmith sickened and died, and we had one concluding meeting at my house, when it was decided to publish his *Retaliation*.”

The obvious defect in all these descriptions is, that the various meetings are carelessly jumbled together, and that incidents, which would be easily understood if separately related, become mixed up in a manner quite unintelligible. But an unpublished letter of Cumberland’s to Garrick is now before me, which seems, to a great extent, to confirm what has been quoted. It was probably written after Goldsmith’s death (the epitaph-writing thus set on foot continued till after *Retaliation* was published), for, besides the meeting to which it more immediately refers, the last half of it appears to describe retrospectively what had taken place when Cumberland’s “liquor” verses were first produced, and this may have been done in answer to some question put by Garrick with a view to that proposed collection of all the poems to which *his* statement was meant to be the preface.

Be this as it may, the letter is highly characteristic. Here, as in everything of Cumberland’s, it is most amusing to see to what

\* See *Memoirs*, i. 369-72. Cumberland’s lines were subsequently printed in the *Gent. Mag.* for Aug. 1778, and may be seen in *Works* (Ed. Cunningham), i. 86-7.

an alarming extent he and his affairs, his writings, or the writings of which he is the object, occupy the scene. One might imagine, in reading it, that it was Richard Cumberland who had given all its interest to an incident which, but for Goldsmith, would not have lived in memory for a day. It is not as the author of his own immortal epitaphs, but simply as the *recitator acerbus* of the temporary trash in which Cumberland had carried out the notion of a feast by supplying suitable drinks thereto, that Goldsmith is prominent here! "We missed your society much on Wednesday last, and I may say to me in particular it was a singular loss, for in your place there came Mr. Whitefoord with his pockets crammed with epitaphs. Two of them did me honour, and by implication yourself; as the turn of both was a mock lamentation over me from you, with a most severe and ill-natured invective principally collected from the strictures of Mr. Bickerstaff, and thrown upon me with a dung-fork. But of myself and him, enough. Doctor Goldsmith's Dinner was very ingenious, but evidently written with haste and negligence. The Dishes were nothing to the purpose, but they were followed by epitaphs that had humour, some satire, and more panegyric. You had your share of both, but the former very sparingly, and in a strain to leave nothing behind, not at all in the character of Mr. Whitefoord's muse. My Wine was drank very cordially, though it was very ill-poured out by Doctor Goldsmith, who proved himself a *recitator acerbus*. The Dean of Derry went out and produced an exceedingly good extempore in answer to my Wine, which had an excellent effect.\* Mr. Beauclerc was there,

\* This piece, addressed "To Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Cumberland," has been preserved, and is very pleasant. In Goldsmith's poem, Dean Barnard figures as "Venison;" and in Cumberland's, a bumper of "conventual Sherry" is set apart for him.

"Dear Noll and dear Dick, since you've made us so merry,  
Accept the best thanks of the poor Dean of Derry!  
Though I here must confess that your meat and your wine  
Are not to my taste, though they're both very fine;  
For Sherry's a liquor monastic, you own—  
Now there's nothing I hate so as drinking alone;

“and joined with every one else in condemning the tenor of Mr. Whitefoord’s invective, who, I believe, was brought maliciously enough by Sir Joshua.”

Cumberland characterises the famous epitaph on Garrick not <sup>1774.</sup> <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> unfairly. This was a subject which the author of *Retaliation* had studied thoroughly ; most familiar had he good reason to be with its lights and its shadows ; very ample and various had been his personal experience of both ; and whether anger or adulation should at last predominate, the reader of this narrative of his life has had abundant means of determining. But neither was visible in the character of Garrick. Indignation makes verses, says the poet ; yet will the verses be all the better in proportion as the indignation is not seen. The lines on Garrick are quite perfect writing. Without anger, the satire is finished, keen, and uncompromising ; the wit is adorned by most discriminating praise ; and the truth is only the more unsparing for its exquisite good manners and good taste. The epitaph writers might well be alarmed. Garrick returned to the charge, with a nervous desire to *re-retaliate* ; and elaborated a longer and more malicious epitaph with some undoubtedly clever lines in it, which he afterwards did not scruple to read to his friends (among them the poet laureate Pye and his wife) as having preceded and given occasion for Goldsmith’s.\* Several of the

It may do for your Monks, or your Curates and Vicars,  
But for my part, I’m fond of more sociable liquors.  
Your Ven’son’s delicious, though too sweet your sauce is—  
*Sed non ego maculis offendar paucis.*  
So soon as you please you may serve me your dish up,  
But instead of your Sherry, pray make me a—Bishop.”

Another piece of verse of the Dean’s has also been preserved, from which it would appear that he was among the first to take alarm at the unexpected satirical faculty exhibited by Goldsmith. He wrote a metrical apology for his first epitaph, in which he laughs at Garrick’s absenting himself from their meetings when the work of retaliation had begun, and adjures the retaliator to “spare a hapless stranger” and “set his wit at Davy.”

“On him let all thy vengeance fall,  
On me you but misplace it ;  
Remember how he call’d thee *Poll*—  
But, ah ! he dares not face it.”

\* Mrs. Pye, the wife of the poet laureate, writes to Garrick from Dijon on the 16th



other assailants submissively deprecated Goldsmith's wrath, in

May, 1774 (*Gar. Cor.* i. 628), "When the Duke of Cumberland was here, he gave

"Mr. Pye a parcel of *Public Advertisers*, which we most eagerly devoured as  
1774. "you will easily believe, and by those I find Dr. Goldsmith has published a  
— "poem called *Retaliation*; if it is written with a tithe of the wit and poetical  
Act. 46. "fire of what you were so good to impart to me which gave occasion to it,

"his poem is fairly worth taking a journey to England on purpose to read. I long  
"to have your opinion of it." I subjoin the lines of retort, not of provocation (as  
indeed Garrick in his own statement admits), whose wit and poetical fire the poet  
laureate's lady so greatly admired.

"Here Hermes, says Jove, who with nectar was mellow,  
Go fetch me some clay,—I will make an odd fellow:  
Right and wrong shall be jumbled, much gold and some dross,  
Without cause be he pleased, without cause be he cross;  
Be sure as I work to throw in contradictions,  
A great love of truth, yet a mind turned to fictions:  
Now mix these ingredients, which warm'd in the baking,  
Turn'd to learning and gaming, religion and raking.  
With the love of a wench, let his writings be chaste;  
Tip his tongue with strange matter, his pen with fine taste;  
That the rake and the poet o'er all may prevail,  
Set fire to the head and set fire to the tail;  
For the joy of each sex on the world I'll bestow it,  
The scholar, rake, christian, dupe, gamester and poet,  
Though a mixture so odd he shall merit great fame,  
And among brother mortals be Goldsmith his name;  
When on earth this strange meteor no more shall appear,  
You, Hermes, shall fetch him—to make us sport here."

A second, which also appears in Garrick's *Works*, is poor enough:

"ON DR. GOLDSMITH'S CHARACTERISTIC COOKERY.

"Are these the choice dishes the Doctor has sent us?  
Is this the great poet whose works so content us?  
This Goldsmith's fine feast who has written fine books?  
Heaven sends us good meat, but the devil sends cooks!"

A third was published in the *Public Ledger* with Garrick's initials, while the matter was town-talk; and this has been copied verbatim for me, from the newspaper, by an obliging correspondent, Mr. Edward Ford. Its genuineness cannot be doubted, for Mr. Fitzgerald (*Life of Garrick*, ii. 363) has given it from a copy in Garrick's handwriting; though not at all improved, I must add, by the substitution of "pen" for the manifestly right word "brain," in the last line. "Epitaph on Dr. Goldsmith, read  
"at the Literary Club when the Doctor was present:

"Reader, here lies a favourite son of fame!  
By a few outlines you will guess his name:  
Full of ideas was his head—so full,  
Had it not strength, they must have cracked his skull:  
When his mouth open'd all were in a pother,  
Rush'd at the door, and tumbled o'er each other!  
But rallying soon with all their force again,  
In bright array they issued from his brain!" D. G.

verses that still exist; and the flutter of fear became very perceptible. "*Retaliation*," says Walter Scott, "had the effect of placing the author on a more equal footing with his society than he had ever before assumed." Fear might doubtless have had that effect, if Goldsmith could have visited St. James's-street again: but a sterner invitation awaited him. Allusions to Kenrick show he was still writing his retaliatory epitaphs in the middle of February; \* such of them as escaped during composition were limited to very few of his acquaintance; and when the publication of the poem challenged wider respect for the writer, the writer had been a week in his grave.

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can,  
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man;  
As an actor, confest without rival to shine;  
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line:  
Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,  
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.  
Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,  
And beplaster'd with rouge his own natural red.  
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;  
'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.  
With no reason on earth to go out of his way,  
He turn'd and he varied full ten times a day:  
Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick  
If they were not his own by finessing and trick:

\* "Our Dods shall be pious, our Kenricks shall lecture." Kenrick's Lectures on Shakespeare began at the Devil-tavern (Temple-bar), towards the close of January 1774, and continued for some time. But a more remarkable evidence exists that he was working at these epitaphs to the last, if we are to believe the anonymous correspondent who sent the additional lines on Caleb Whitefoord which appeared in the fifth edition of *Retaliation*. I quote the publisher's preface: "After the fourth edition of this poem was printed, the publisher received an Epitaph on Mr. Whitefoord from a friend of the late Doctor Goldsmith, enclosed in a letter of which the following is an abstract:—'I have in my possession a sheet of paper containing near forty lines in the Doctor's own handwriting; there are many scattered broken verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds, Counsellor Ridge, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Whitefoord. The epitaph on the last-mentioned gentleman is the only one that is finished, and therefore I have copied it that you may add it to the next edition.' 'It is a striking proof of Doctor Goldsmith's good nature. I saw this sheet of paper in the Doctor's room five or six days before he died; and as I had got all the other epitaphs, I asked him if I might take it. In truth you may, my boy (replied 'he), for it will be of no use to me where I am going.'" The reader must use his judgment in determining whether or not this story is credible. It has to me a somewhat doubtful look.

1774.

Æt. 46.

He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,  
 For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back.  
 Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came,  
 And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame,  
 Till, his relish grown callous, almost to disease,  
 Who pepper'd the highest was surest to please.  
 But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,  
 If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.  
 Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls so grave,  
 What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave!  
 How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you raised,  
 While he was be-Roscus'd, and you were be-praised!  
 But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,  
 To act as an angel and mix with the skies:  
 Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,  
 Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will;  
 Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,  
 And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.\*

Other brief passages of the poem which were handed about at the same time with this character of Garrick, Burke is said to have received under solemn injunctions of secrecy; which he promised to observe if they had passed into no other hands, but from which he released himself with all despatch when told that Mrs. Cholmondeley had also received a copy.† It would be curious to know, if,

\* Mr. Mitford suggests that the hint of the commencing part of *Retaliation* may have been borrowed and adorned from Motteux's rough sketch, in his prologue to Farquhar's *Inconstant*:

"Like hungry guests, a sitting audience looks,  
 Plays are like suppers, poets are the cooks.  
 Each Act a course, each Scene a different dish," &c.

But it may not be the less worth mentioning, in connection with the fact that the two most prominent names in the poem are those of Garrick and Burke, that there exists a playful letter of Burke's addressed to Garrick some four or five years before the present date, from which one can hardly help thinking that Goldsmith may have drawn some hint for the opening lines of his poem, before he saw either Scarron or Motteux. Burke, writing in great spirits to Garrick during the exciting session of 1769 (when, as poor Goldsmith remarked, he was supposed to be near his apotheosis), sends him a *rosa sera*, a late turtle, thus introducing it. "Your true epicureans are of opinion, you know, that it contains in itself all kinds of flesh, fish, and fowl. It is therefore a dish fit for one who can represent all the solidity of flesh, the volatility of fowl, and the oddity of fish. As this entertainment can be found no longer anywhere but at your table, or at those tables to which you give conviviality and cheerfulness, let the type and shadow of the master grace his board; a little pepper he can add himself; the wine likewise he will supply: I do not know whether he still retains any friend who can finish the dressing of his turtle by a gentle squeeze of the lemon." *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 332.

† "When," says Cooke, "he had got on as far as the character of Sir Joshua

in the manuscript confided to him, he found that exquisite epitaph, formerly quoted, in which not alone his character was expressed, but his career was prefigured.\* This may be doubtful, for the plan of the poem, it is evident, had grown far beyond its original <sup>1774.</sup> <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> purpose, as, "with chaos and blunders encircling his head," poor Goldsmith continued to work at it. It became something better than "retaliation." In the last lines, on which he is said to have been engaged when his fatal illness seized him, may be read the gratitude of a life. They will help to keep Reynolds immortal.

Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,  
He has not left a wiser or better behind.  
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand :  
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland ;  
Still born to improve us in every part,  
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.  
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,  
When they judged without skill he was still hard of bearing :  
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,  
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.  
By flattery unspoiled . . . .

It is not displeasing to think that Goldsmith's hand should have been tracing that unfinished line when illness struck the pen from it for ever. It was in the middle of March 1774. Some little time before, he had gone to his Edgeware lodging, to pursue his labours undisturbed. Here, at length, he had finished the *Animated Nature* ; and the last letter which remains of all that have come down to us, characteristic of his whole life, was written concerning that book to a publisher, Mr. Nourse, who had bought Griffin's original interest. It asked him to allow "his friend Griffin" to

"Reynolds in the poem, which was the last character, I believe, of the Doctor's "writing" (this would insinuate, but with not very good grounds, that the Caleb Whitefoord lines were Caleb's own), "he shewed it to Mr. Burke, of whose talents and "friendship he always spoke in the highest degree, but required at the same time a "solemn promise of secrecy. 'Before I promise this,' says Mr. Burke, 'be explicit "with me; have you shewn it to anybody else?' Here the Doctor paused for some "time, but at length confessed he had given a copy of it to Mrs. Cholmondeley. "'O then,' replied Mr. Burke, 'to avoid any possible imputation of betraying secrets "I'll promise nothing, but leave it to yourself to confide in me.'" *Europ. Mag.* xiv. 174.

† See *ante*, 275-G.



purchase back a portion of the copyright; thanked him at the same time for an "over-payment," which in consideration of the completed manuscript, and its writer's necessities, Mr. Nourse <sup>1774.</sup> had consented to make; and threw out an idea of extending <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> the work into the vegetable and fossil kingdoms.\* Always working, always wanting, still asking, and hoping, and planning out fresh labour! Here, too, he was completing the *Grecian History*; making another *Abridgement of English History* for schools; translating Scarron's *Comic Romance*; revising, for the moderate payment of five guineas vouchsafed by James Dodsley, and with the further condition that he was to put his name to it, a new edition of his *Enquiry into Polite Learning*;† labouring to bring into shape the compilation on *Experimental Philosophy*, which had been begun eight years before; writing his *Retaliation*; and making new resolves for the future. Such was the end, such the unwearying and sordid toil, to which even his six years' term of established fame had brought him! The cycle of his life was complete; and in the same miserable labour wherein it had begun, it was to close.

Not without "resolving" to the last, and still hoping to begin anew. "His numerous friends," said Walpole to Mason, speaking

\* "SIR, As the work for which we engaged is now near coming out and for the over payment of which I return you my thanks, I would consider myself still more obliged to you if you would let my friend Griffin have a part of it. He is ready to pay you for any part you will think proper to give him, and as I have thoughts of extending the work into the vegetable and fossil kingdoms, you shall share with him in any such engagement as may happen to ensue. I am, Sir, your very humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH." *Prior*, ii. 504-5. Of the influence with booksellers, reported if not real, which the writer seems to have maintained to the last through all his sore distress, here is a proof dating but a few months earlier. It is addressed to the same publisher, Mr. Nourse. "Sir, the bearer is Doctor Andrews, who has just finished a work relative to Denmark, which I have seen and read with great pleasure. He is of opinion that a short letter of this kind expressing my approbation, will be a proper introduction to you. I therefore once more recommend it in the warmest manner, and unless I am mistaken it will be a great credit to him as well as benefit to the purchaser of the copy. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH." The book was accepted by Nourse and appeared in the following spring.

† Mr. Cunningham has carefully marked all the changes and omissions (at which I have glanced from time to time) in this edition, and they may be seen in the *Works* (1854), ii. 1-78.

of this period of his life three days after its sudden close, "neglected him shamefully at last, as if they had no business with him when it was too serious to laugh. He had lately written 1774.  
"epitaphs for them all, some of which hurt, and perhaps made Æt. 46.  
"them not sorry that his own was the first necessary."\* I do not know what excuse may have been given for this piece of scandal, but it is certain that Goldsmith had bitterly felt a reproach which Johnson gave him at their latest interview before leaving London, when, having asked him and Reynolds to dinner at the Temple to meet an old acquaintance to whom his *Dictionary* project had reintroduced him (Dr. Kippis, who tells the anecdote),† Johnson silently reproved the extravagance of a too expensive dinner, by sending away a whole "second course" untouched.

Soon after that, he was taking measures to sell the lease of his Temple chambers; and here in Edgeware he was telling his former friends that he should never again live longer than two months a year in London. "One has a strange propensity," says Boswell, describing a perpetual habit of his own, "to fix upon some point of time from whence a better course of life may begin." Ah, yes! It is so easy to settle that way what would otherwise never be settled, and comfort ourselves with a flattery of the future. We seem mended at once, without having taken the trouble of mending. Unhappily it is from the same instinctive dislike of trouble that the after-failures of these formal resolutions come. Never will they cease, notwithstanding, till castle-building on the ground

\* *Correspondence of Walpole and Mason*, i. 138.

† And whose name I cannot introduce without a regret that Goldsmith had not lived to assist in his *Dictionary* project, to which he would probably have contributed many a charming biography, and of which Walpole soon after this date was writing in his most characteristic strain: "When men write for profit, they are not very delicate. What credit can a *Biographia Britannica* be when the editor is a mercenary writer?" &c. &c. Nevertheless Dr. Kippis's attempt was a great credit to him, and it was a discredit to the age that it should not have been more successful. Its first volume was published four years after Goldsmith's death; and after struggling through five volumes, over a lingering space of fifteen years, it had to be discontinued with the letter E incomplete. It was the last effort of "the trade" to combine anything like greatness, or public usefulness, with their schemes for private profit, and it marks the close of an honourable epoch in the history of book-selling.

is as easy as to build castles in the air. The philosopher smiles at that word *never*, but to the last moment it is pronounced by us all.

Here it was whispering to Goldsmith all sorts of enduring  
<sup>1774.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 46.</sup> resolutions, when the sudden attack of an old illness warned him to seek advice in London. This was a local disorder, a strangury, which had grown from sedentary habits, and had required great care at every period of his life. It was neglect, says Davies, which now brought it on. He describes it as occasioned by "a continual vexation of mind, arising from his involved circumstances;" and adds, "Death, I really believe, was welcome to a man of his great sensibility."\* In that case, the welcome visitor was come.

\* *Life of Garrick*, ii. 167.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ILLNESS AND DEATH.

1774.

GOLDSMITH arrived in London in the middle of March, and obtained relief from the immediate attack of his disease, but was left struggling with symptoms of low nervous fever. Yet he was again among his friends, as well as in the old haunts; and his cordial and close relations with the Horneck family appear in the very last traces left of him in the world.\* On Friday, the 25th of March, he seems to have been especially anxious to attend the club (Charles Fox, Sir Charles Bunbury, George Steevens, and Dr. George Fordyce, had just obtained their election); but in the afternoon of that day he took to his bed, and at eleven o'clock at night a very benevolent as well as skilful surgeon-apothecary, named Hawes,† who lived in the Strand, whom Goldsmith was in the habit

\* Charles Horneck (before referred to, 147) had married in the May of 1773 a daughter of the deceased Lord Albemarle, a lady who in the March of this year ran away with Mr. Scawen, her husband's most intimate friend: and when, in 1775, Horneck sued for his divorce, it appeared that in March 1774 he had been staying with his wife at Scawen's house in Cork-street, Burlington-gardens; and that on a particular evening "in the middle of that month," one of the female servants found Mrs. Horneck's bedchamber door fastened; whereupon next morning she "inquired why Mrs. Horneck had locked her bedchamber door? and she replied that Mr. Horneck had been at home, and said to her that Mr. Scawen and Doctor Goldsmith were to come and spend the evening in her bedchamber; to which the witness answered that Mr. Horneck had not been at home from the time he went out to dinner, and that Doctor Goldsmith had not been there at all."

† For a well-deserved tribute to this excellent man, who took afterwards a physician's degree, and passed a long life of active humanity and public usefulness, see *Gent. Mag.* lxxviii. (1808) 1121. The pamphlet I quote in the text is entitled



of consulting, and to whose efforts to establish a Humane Society he had given active sympathy and assistance, was sent for. He found

Goldsmith complaining of violent pain, extending over all the <sup>1774.</sup> fore-part of his head; his tongue moist, his pulse at ninety, <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> and his mind made up that he should be cured by James's fever-powders. He had derived such benefit from this fashionable medicine in previous attacks, that it seems to have left him with as obstinate a sense of its universal efficacy as Horace Walpole had, who swore he should take it if the house were on fire. Mr. Hawes saw at once, however, that, his complaint being more of a nervous affection than a febrile disease, such a remedy would be dangerous; that it would force too large and sudden an exhaustion of the vital powers, to enable him to cope with the disorder; and he implored him not to think of it. For more than half an hour, he says, he sat by the bedside urging its probable danger; "vehemently entreating" his difficult patient; but unable to prevail upon him to promise that he would not resort to it. Hawes then, after formal protest, said he had one request to make of him. "He very warmly asked me what that was." It was that he would permit his friend Dr. Fordyce, who had formerly attended him, to be called in at once. He held out against this for some time; endeavoured to raise an obstacle by saying Fordyce was gone to spend the evening in Gerrard-street ("where," poor Goldsmith added, "I should also have been if I had not been indisposed"); and at last reluctantly consented. "Well, you may send for him, if you will." Hawes despatched the note to Gerrard-street; and Fordyce, arriving soon after Hawes had left, seems to have given Goldsmith a warning against the fever-medicine equally strong, but as unavailing. Hawes sent medicine and

*An Account of the late Dr. Goldsmith's illness, so far as relates to the exhibition of Dr. James's Powders, together with Remarks on the Use and Abuse of Powerful Medicines in the beginning of fevers and other acute diseases, by William Hawes, M.D. 1—45. My copy is the fourth edition (1780), and is dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds and Edmund Burke, as "two of Dr. Goldsmith's most intimate and respectable friends;" of whom in the course of the pamphlet (22) it is observed that they, as well as "Mr. Bott and others of Dr. Goldsmith's best and most esteemed friends, have also testified their approbation of my conduct."*

leeches soon after twelve; and, in the hope that Fordyce would have succeeded where he had failed, did not send the fever-powders ordered. But Goldsmith continued obstinate. The leeches were applied, the medicine rejected, and the lad <sup>1774.</sup> who brought them from Hawes's surgery was sent back for <sup>Æt. 40.</sup> a packet of the powders.

So far, in substance, is the narrative of Hawes; which there is no fair ground for disputing. I omit everything not strictly descriptive of the illness; but the good surgeon had evidently a strong regard for his patient.\* Other facts, in what remains to be told, appeared in formal statements subsequently published by Francis Newbery, the proprietor of the fever-powders, to vindicate the fame of his medicine. These were made and signed by Goldsmith's servant, John Eyles; his laundress, Mary Ginger; and a night nurse, Sarah Smith, called in on the second day of the illness. As soon as Goldsmith took the powder sent him from the Strand, he protested it was the wrong powder; was very angry with Hawes; threatened to pay his bill next morning, and have done with him; and certainly despatched Eyles, in the afternoon of that

\* Hawes spoke from experience of his help in many humane projects. I quote the concluding passages of his pamphlet: "It may not be improper to observe (as a kind of Apology for some particulars which are before related to have passed between me and Dr. Goldsmith), that he was bred a Physician, and therefore it was natural to converse with him on the subject of his disorder in a medical manner; but his attention had been so wholly absorbed by polite literature, that it prevented him from making any great progress in medical studies. As an elegant Writer, he will always be held in the highest esteem by all persons of true taste. His *Traveller* and *Deserted Village* are deservedly numbered among the best poetical productions of the present age; and some of his essays, and other pieces, are very advantageously distinguished by general wit and native humour. It should also be remembered, that he was not only an excellent writer, but a most amiable man. His humanity and generosity greatly exceeded the narrow limits of his fortune; and those who were no judges of the literary merit of the Author, could not but love the Man for that benevolence by which he was so strongly characterised. . . . N.B. As my late respected and ingenious friend, Dr. Goldsmith, was pleased to honour Dr. Cogan and myself with his patronage and assistance in the Undertaking for the Recovery of persons apparently dead by Drowning, and other sudden accidents, now on the point of being established in this kingdom, I think I cannot shew a greater proof of my esteem for the deceased, than by applying the profits of this publication (if any should arise) to an institution, the design of which was favoured with his approbation." 15-16.

day, for a fresh packet from Newbery's. He sent at the same time for his laundress (she was wife of the head-porter of the Temple), to "come and sit by him, until John returned;" <sup>1774.</sup> described himself, when she arrived, as worse; and damned <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> Hawes ("those were his very words") for the mistake he had made. In the afternoon and night of Saturday, two of the fresh powders were administered, one by the servant, the other by the nurse. The nurse was also despatched for another apothecary, named Maxwell, living near St. Dunstan's church, who came, but declined to act as matters then stood; and from that time "the patient followed the advice of his physicians." He was too ill to make further resistance. Such is the substance of the evidence of the servants; in which a somewhat exaggerated form was given to what might in itself be substantially true, yet in no way affect the veracity of Mr. Hawes.\* If Goldsmith asserted that a wrong powder had been sent, the sudden impulse to think so was perhaps not unnatural, after the course he had unwisely persisted in; but that Hawes really made the mistake, is not credible. Reynolds and Burke made later investigation, and wholly acquitted him; a recent inquirer and intelligent practitioner, Mr. White Cooper, confirms strongly the opinion on which he seems to have acted; nor did poor Goldsmith himself very long adhere to the charge he had made.†

Mr. Hawes (the substance of whose brief narrative I resume, with such illustrations as other sources have supplied) did not see his patient when he called on Saturday morning. "His master was dozing, he lay very quiet," was the announcement of Eyles. He called again at night; when, "with great appearance of

\* The various affidavits, as put forth by Francis Newbery to vindicate the reputation of his medicine, are reprinted as an appendix to Hawes's *Account*.

† Horace Walpole is no authority on such a point, but it may mark the interest which was felt on the question if I add what he wrote to Mason on the third day after the fatal termination of the illness. "The republic of Parnassus has lost a member; Dr. Goldsmith is dead of a purple fever, and I think he might have been saved if he had continued James's powder, which had had much effect, but his physician interposed. . . . The poor soul had sometimes parts, though never common sense." *Mitford's Correspondence of Walpole and Mason*, i. 138.

"concern," the man told him that everything was worse. Hawes went in, and found Goldsmith extremely exhausted and reduced, his pulse very quick and small; and on inquiring how he did, "he sighed deeply, and in a very low voice said he <sup>1774.</sup> <sub>Æt. 40.</sub> "wished he had taken my friendly advice last night." To other questions he made no answer. He was so weak and low that he had neither strength nor spirit to speak. There was now, clearly, danger of the worst; and Fordyce next day proposed to call another physician, named Dr. Turton, into consultation. Goldsmith's consent was obtained to this step at eight o'clock on Monday morning, and Hawes retired altogether from attendance. The patient had again passed a very bad night, "and lay absolutely "sunk with weakness." Fordyce and Turton met that day; and continued their consultations twice daily, until all was over.

A week passed: the symptoms so fluctuating in the course of it, and the evidence of active disease so manifestly declining, that even sanguine expectations of recovery would appear to have been at one time entertained. But Goldsmith could not sleep. His reason seemed clear; what he said was always perfectly sensible; "he was at times even cheerful;" but sleep had deserted him, his appetite was gone, and it became obvious, in the state of weakness to which he had been reduced, that want of sleep might in itself be fatal. It then occurred to Dr. Turton to put a very pregnant question to his patient. "Your pulse," he said, "is in greater disorder "than it should be, from the degree of fever which you have. Is "your mind at ease?" "No, it is not," was Goldsmith's melancholy answer.\* They are the last words we are to hear him utter in this world. The end arrived suddenly and unexpectedly. He lay in the sound and calm sleep which so anxiously had been looked for, at midnight on Sunday, the 3rd of April; his respiration was easy and natural, his skin warm and moist, and the favourable turn was thought to have come. But at four o'clock in the morning, the apothecary Maxwell was called up in haste, and found him in strong convulsions. These continued without intermission;

\* Boswell, vi. 305-6.



he sank rapidly; and at a quarter before five o'clock on the morning of Monday, the 4th of April, 1774, having then lived five months beyond his forty-fifth year, Oliver Goldsmith died.\*

1774.

Æt. 46.

When Burke was told, he burst into tears. Reynolds was in his painting-room when the messenger went to him: but at once he laid his pencil aside, which in times of great family distress he had not been known to do; left his painting-room; and did not re-enter it that day. Northcote describes the blow as the "severest Sir Joshua ever received." Nor was the day less gloomy for Johnson. "Poor Goldsmith is gone" was his anticipation of the evil tidings. "Of poor dear Doctor Goldsmith," he wrote three months later to Boswell, "there is little more to be told. He died of a fever, I am afraid more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?"† He spoke of the loss for years, as with the tenderness of a recent grief; and in his little room hung round with portraits of his favourite friends, even as Swift's was adorned with the "just half-a-dozen"‡ that he really loved away from Laracor, Goldsmith had a place of

\* I quote the obituary from the public journals: "DIED.] Much and deservedly regretted, at his chambers in Brick-court, in the Temple, Dr. Oliver Goldsmith, Author of the Poems of the *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, and many ingenious works in prose. He was seized on Friday se'nnight with a nervous fever in his brain, which occasioned his death."—"Dr. Goldsmith is dead, and my cousin Mrs. Harris," is the dry mention of Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory (*Ossory Letters*, i. 133), the day but one after the event. A few days before he had written to the same lady of an illness affecting his favourite lap-dog, "I have been out of bed twenty times every night, have had no sleep, and sat up with her till three this morning." i. 77.

† *Boswell*, v. 188. The day after, he wrote to Langton: "Chambers, you find, is gone far" (he had set out for India), "and poor Goldsmith is gone much farther. He died of a fever, exasperated, as I believe, by the fear of distress. He had raised money," &c. (*ante*, 395). "I wrote the following tetrastich on poor Goldsmith," &c. (*post*, 428). *Boswell*, v. 189.

‡ *Journal to Stella*, Feb. 27, 1712-13 (*Works*, iii. 122.) "Lord Bolingbroke and Lady Masham have promised to sit for me; but I despair of lord-treasurer; only I hope he will give me a copy, and then I shall have all the pictures of those I really love here; just half-a-dozen; only I will make lord-keeper give me his print in a frame."

honour.\* “So, your wild genius, poor Doctor Goldsmith, is “dead,” wrote Mrs. Carter to Mrs. Vesey. “He was just going “to publish a book called *Animated Nature*. I believe a com-  
 “pilation of Natural History. He died of a fever, poor man. <sup>1774.</sup>  
 “I am sincerely glad to hear he has no family, so his loss will <sup>Æt. 46.</sup>  
 “not be felt in domestic life.” † The respectable and learned old lady could not possibly know in what other *undomestic* ways it might be felt. The staircase of Brick-court is said to have been filled with mourners, the reverse of domestic; women without a home, without domesticity of any kind, with no friend but him they had come to weep for; outcasts of that great, solitary, wicked city, to whom he had never forgotten to be kind and charitable. ‡ And he had domestic mourners too. His coffin was re-opened at the request of Miss Horneck and her sister (such was the regard he was known to have for them), that a lock might be cut from his hair. It was in Mrs. Gwyn’s possession when she died, after nearly seventy years.§

A public funeral was at first proposed; and Lords Shelburne and Louth, Reynolds, Burke, Beauclerc, and Garrick were to have borne the pall; but it was afterwards felt that a private ceremony would

\* “We were shown,” says Boswell, describing a visit to Lord Scarsdale’s seat at Kiddlestone, by Johnson and himself, three years after Goldsmith’s death, “a pretty “large library. In his Lordship’s dressing-room lay Johnson’s small dictionary: he “showed it to me, with some eagerness, saying: ‘Look ye! Quæ regio in terris nostri “non plena laboris.’ He observed, also, Goldsmith’s *Animated Nature*; and said, “‘Here’s our friend! The poor Doctor would have been happy to hear of this.’” *Boswell*, vi. 302. He wrote to Miss Reynolds five years after Goldsmith’s death, and only five before his own, “You will do me a great favour if you will buy for me the “prints of Mr. Burke, Mr. Dyer, and Dr. Goldsmith, as you know good impressions.” *Boswell*, vii. 297.

† *Letters*, iv. 110. 4th May, 1774.

‡ See *ante*, 155. “I was in his chambers in Brick-court the other day,” writes a friend, with whom I afterwards visited them, and cannot better describe them than in the few simple words of his letter. “The bed-room is a closet without any light “in it. It quite pains one to think of the kind old fellow dying off there. There is “some good carved work in the rooms: and one can fancy him with General “Oglethorpe and Topham Beauclerc, and the fellow coming in with the screw of tea “and sugar. What a fine picture Leslie would make of it!” (The writer was Mr. Thackeray. 1870.)

§ Northcote’s *Life of Reynolds*, i. 326, and *Conversations*, 169.

better become the circumstances in which he had died. All the goods he possessed, with such small fragments of property as he had left at the Edgeware cottage, were of course in due time sold by public <sup>1774.</sup> auction, including his "large, valuable, and well-chosen <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> "library of curious and scarce books," his "household furniture and other effects":\* but Bott, Griffin, and others, still remained with unsatisfied claims; and his brother Maurice, who had come over to London in the month preceding the sale for the purpose of "administering" to what had been left, soon saw how hopeless it was to expect that his brother's debts would not absorb everything, and therefore, even before the sale took place, went back empty-handed as he came. For the funeral Burke and Reynolds directed all arrangements; Hawes saw them carried into effect;† and the fifth day after his death was appointed for the ceremony. Reynolds's nephew, Palmer (afterwards Dean of Cashel), attended as chief mourner: and was accompanied by Mr. Day, afterwards Sir John Day and judge advocate-general at Bengal; by his relative and namesake heretofore mentioned, Robert Day, who became the Irish judge; and by Mr. Hawes, and his friend Mr. Etherington. These were unexpectedly joined on the morning of the funeral by Hugh Kelly, who in the presence of that great sorrow had only

\* See Appendix B.

† And also, by the request of Reynolds, afterwards managed the disposition and sale of the furniture and books, which took place in July. The poet's small writing-desk, a fragment saved from the wreck, is still (1853) in the possession of Mr. Hawes's grandson, the under-secretary-at-war, who justly values it. It will not be inappropriate here to quote the letter which Maurice Goldsmith addressed to Mr. Hawes on leaving London. His manners may have been homely and uncouth, but he could express an honest feeling in plain and simple language, and at any rate deserved a better fate than that which the reader will find described in Appendix A to this volume. The letter is printed in Mr. Hawes's pamphlet (22): "London, June 10, 1774. MR. HAWES. In a few hours I purpose leaving town, and now return you most sincere thanks for your kind behaviour to me since my arrival here. I also am thoroughly convinced of your care, assiduity, and diligence with respect to my brother, Doctor Goldsmith. I am also convinced that, as his affairs were put into your hands by Sir Joshua Reynolds, he could have chose no one who would have acted with more caution and disinterestedness than you have done; for which you have my sincere wishes for the welfare of you and yours. I am, sir, with thanks and respects to your family,

"Your much obliged humble servant,

MAURICE GOLDSMITH."





MARLOW AND MISS HARDCASTLE.—SCENE FROM "SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."





remembered happier and more friendly days, and was seen still standing weeping at the grave as the others moved away.\* So, at five o'clock on the evening of Saturday, the 9th of April, the remains of Oliver Goldsmith were committed to their <sup>1774.</sup> final resting-place in the burial ground of the Temple Church. <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> No memorial indicates the grave to the pilgrim or the stranger, nor is it possible any longer to identify the spot which received all that was mortal of this delightful writer.

The notion of a monument in Westminster Abbey was the suggestion of Reynolds; and he selected the spot over the south door in poets' corner, where it was subsequently placed in the area of a pointed arch, between the monuments of Gay and the Duke of Argyll. It consisted of a medallion portrait and tablet. Nollekens was the sculptor; and, two years after Goldsmith's death, the inscription was written by Johnson. "I send you the poor dear "Doctor's epitaph," he writes to Reynolds, with grief apparently as fresh as though their loss had been of yesterday. "Read it "first yourself; and if you then think it right, show it to the "club." The principal members of the club, with other friends, dined soon after at Reynolds's:† and so many objections were started on its being read that it was resolved to submit them to Johnson in the form of a round robin, such as sailors adopt at sea when a matter of grievance is started, and no one wishes to stand first or last in remonstrance with the captain.

After stating the great pleasure with which the intended epitaph

\* I believe this to have been a genuine feeling on the part of Kelly. Yet it was made the subject of an attack at the time.

"Hence Kelly, who years, without honour or shame,  
Had been sticking his bodkin in Oliver's fame,  
Who thought, like the Tartar, by this to inherit  
His genius, his learning, simplicity, spirit;  
Now sets every feature to weep o'er his fate,  
And acts as a mourner to blubber in state," &c. &c.

I will not pollute these pages by the foul epitaph with which Kenrick pursued Goldsmith into his grave, describing him as one

"By his own art who justly died,  
A blund'ring, artless, suicide."

† So, *Boswell*. Cumberland (i. 371) says it was at the house of Beauclerc.

had been read, and the admiration it had created for its elegant composition and masterly style "considered abstractedly," this round robin, which was dictated by Burke, went on to say that its <sup>1774.</sup> <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> circumscribers were yet of opinion that the character of Goldsmith as a writer, particularly as a poet, was not perhaps delineated with all the exactness which Dr. Johnson was capable of giving it; and that therefore, with deference to his superior judgment, they humbly requested he would at least take the trouble of revising it, and of making such alterations and additions as he should think proper upon a further perusal. This part of the remonstrance Johnson received with good-humour; and desired Sir Joshua, who presented it, to tell the gentlemen he would alter the epitaph in any manner they pleased, as to the sense of it. But then came the pinch of the matter. Langton, who was present when the remonstrance was drawn up, had not objected thus far; but to what now was added, he refused to give his name. "But if we" "might venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to" "request that he would write the epitaph in English rather than" "in Latin, as we think that the memory of so eminent an English" "writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his" "works are likely to be so lasting an ornament, which we also" "know to have been the opinion of the late Doctor himself." Langton was too sturdy a classic to assent to this; his scholarly sympathies having already invited and received, from Johnson, even a Greek lament for their common loss. The names circumscribed were those of Burke, Francklin (the translator of *Sophocles* and *Lucian* who misspelled his own name in signing it), Chamier, Colman, Vachell (a friend of Sir Joshua's), Reynolds, Forbes (the Scotch baronet and biographer of Beattie),\* Barnard, Sheridan, Metcalfe (another great friend of Sir Joshua's, and a humane as well as active member of the House of Commons), Gibbon, and Joseph Warton. "I wonder," exclaimed Johnson, when he read

\* From whose communication to Boswell (vi. 207-10) these facts are derived. I may mention that Francklin signs his name in the round robin without the c. But his identity is not to be disputed. He was Greek professor at Cambridge, and chaplain to the Royal Academy.

this part of the remonstrance, and the names, "that Joe Warton, "a scholar by profession, should be such a fool. I should have "thought Mund Burke, too, would have had more sense." His formal answer was not less emphatic. He requested <sup>1774.</sup> Reynolds at once to acquaint his fellow-mutineers, that he <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription. The Latin was accordingly placed upon the marble, where it now remains. I append a translation as nearly literal, line for line, as I could make it, consistent with an attempt to preserve the spirit as well as manner of the original.

OLIVARIÏ GOLDSMITH  
 Poetæ, Physici, Historici,  
 qui nullum fere scribendi genus  
     non tetigit,  
 nullum quod tetigit non ornavit: \*  
     sive risus essent movendi,  
     sive lacrymæ,  
 affectuum potens, at lenis dominator;  
 ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis;  
 oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:  
 hoc monumento memoriam coluit  
     Sodalium amor,  
     Amicorum fides,  
     Lectorum veneratio.  
 Natus Hiberniâ, Forneisæ Lonfordiensis  
     in loco cui nomen Pallas,  
     Nov. xxix. MDCCXXXI.  
 Eblanæ literis institutus,  
     Obijt Londini  
     Apr. iv. MDCCCLXXIV.†

\* Dean Stanley (*Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, p. 297), remarking happily of this expression that it has passed into the proverbial Latin of mankind, gives hastily a popular but not correct version of it, *nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*, and adds: "Professor Conington calls my attention to the fact that, if this were a "genuine classical quotation, it would be *ornaret*. The slight mistake proves that "it is Johnson's own." The mistake is in the quotation. The line as it stands in my text is good Latin, expressing exactly what Johnson intended; and as it so stands, it is on the marble. (I leave this note as written, the error being commonly made in quoting the line it refers to: but the Dean has corrected his mistake in the later editions of his agreeable book.)

† This epitaph was first made public in Campbell's *Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland* (437-8), Dr. Johnson having furnished a copy. But it was then incomplete, the exact place of birth not having been ascertained. Mr. Croker, in his last and greatly improved edition of *Boswell*, justly expresses himself at a loss to



OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH—  
 Poet, Naturalist, Historian,  
 who left scarcely any kind of writing  
 untouched,  
 and touched nothing that he did not adorn :  
 Whether smiles were to be stirred  
 or tears,  
 commanding our emotions, yet a gentle master :  
 In genius lofty, lively, versatile,  
 in style weighty, clear, engaging—  
 The memory in this monument is cherished  
 by the love of Companions,  
 the faithfulness of Friends  
 the reverence of Readers.  
 He was born in Ireland,  
 at a place called Pallas,  
 (in the parish) of Forney, (and county) of Longford,  
 on the 29th Nov. 1731.  
 Trained in letters at Dublin.  
 Died in London,  
 4th April, 1774.

Sixty-one years after this monument was placed in the Abbey it occurred to the Benchers of the Temple Inn to which I have the honour to belong, to contribute to the place such additional interest as it might receive from commemorating Goldsmith's connection with it. A simple and handsome inscribed slab of plain solid white marble was accordingly, in 1837, fixed in the church, which, when the subsequent repairs and restorations compelled its removal, was transferred to the recesses of the vestry-chamber, where it now remains interred.

discover how an English inscription should disgrace an English church, or a writer whose fame is exclusively English ; and seems disposed, on the other hand, to think a Latin inscription, in such a place, and for such a purpose, about as absurd in principle as Smollett's dinner after the manner of the ancients. I may here add, from Mr. Croker's volume, the Greek tetrastrich which (*ante*, 422) Johnson sent to Langton.

Τὸν τάφον εἰσοράας τὸν 'Ολιβάραιοι' κοινῇν  
 'Αφροσι μὴ σιμνήν Ξεῖνε, πόδεσσι πάτει.  
 Οἷσι μίμηλε φύσις, μέτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν,  
 Κλαίετε ποιητὴν, ἱστορικὸν, φυσικόν.

Here GOLDSMITH lies. O ye, who deeds of Eld  
 Or Nature's works, or sacred Song regard  
 With reverence tread . . . for he in all excelled  
 Historian and Philosopher and Bard.

THIS TABLET  
RECORDING THAT  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH  
DIED IN THE TEMPLE  
ON THE 4TH OF APRIL, 1774,  
AND WAS BURIED  
IN THE ADJOINING CHURCHYARD,  
WAS ERECTED BY THE BENCHERS OF  
THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF THE INNER TEMPLE,  
A.D. 1837.  
SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK,  
TREASURER.

Availing myself of the friendship of the distinguished person whose name is affixed to this tablet, at that time Treasurer of the Inner Temple and afterwards Chief Baron, we visited together, in 1852, the burial-ground of the Temple in the hope of identifying the grave; but we did not succeed in the object of our search. We examined unavailingly every spot beneath which interment had taken place, and every stone and sculpture on the ground; nor was it possible to discover any clue in the register of burials which we afterwards looked through with the Master of the Temple. It simply records as "Buried 9th April, Oliver Goldsmith, MB, late "of Brick-court, Middle Temple."

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I had so written nearly twenty years ago; and in a correspondence respecting it held lately with the present Reader of the Temple, the Rev. Mr. Ainger thus wrote to me last August (1870). "As you suppose, I was well aware that the exact position "of Goldsmith's grave is not known. A flat gravestone with his "name has however been placed in the yard at the north side of "the church, a few feet west of the Master's house. As you do "not mention this stone in the last edition (1855) of your *Life*, "which I have by me, I conclude that it has been placed there "subsequently. The old vestry of the church has been superseded "by a larger and more commodious room since you wrote, and is "now occupied by the blowing-machinery of the organ; so that "the Tablet which, as you say, was transferred thither at the

"restoration of the church, is now still further hidden from the  
"eyes of the curious." More recently (1871) I learn that it is moved  
into the triforium, where it will in future remain; and not a  
<sup>1774.</sup>  
<sup>Æt. 46.</sup> Sunday passes, the Reader of the Temple assures me, that he  
does not see pilgrims of all classes thronging about the flat  
gravestone in the Temple churchyard on which mere fancy has in-  
scribed for them '*Here lies OLIVER GOLDSMITH.*' Within the last  
few years too, by the exercise of a higher fancy, the poet has  
received in the land of his birth more exalted homage. His full-  
length statue by Mr. Foley stands now at the gate of the Dublin  
University. An engraving of it, with approval and assistance from  
the sculptor, adorns my volumes; and the painting by Reynolds,  
also in this work reproduced from its original, could not have a  
worthier companion.

## CHAPTER XXII.

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### THE REWARDS OF GENIUS.

1774.

WHILE Goldsmith lay upon his death-bed, there was much discussion in London about the rights of authors. After two decisions in the courts of common law, which declared an author's property to be perpetual in any work he might have written, <sup>1774.</sup> the question had been brought upon appeal before the House <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> of Lords, where the opinions of the judges were taken.\* This was that dignified audience in whose ears might still be ringing some echo of the memorable words addressed to them by Lord Chesterfield. "Wit, my Lords, is a sort of property—the property of those who have it, and too often the only property they have to depend on. It is, indeed, but a precarious dependance. We, my Lords, thank God, have a dependance of another kind."

\* Lord Shelburne, in a letter to Lord Chatham, describes the scene, with a very manifest spleen against the Chief Justice. "Lord Mansfield showed himself the merest Captain Bobadil that, I suppose, ever existed in real life. I ought, instead of being a bad writer, to be a good painter, to convey to your lordship the ridicule of the scene. You can perhaps imagine to yourself the Bishop of Carlisle, an old metaphysical head of a college, reading a paper, not a speech, out of an old sermon book, with very bad sight, leaning on the table, Lord Mansfield sitting at it, with eyes of fixed melancholy looking at him, knowing that the bishop's were the only eyes in the House who could not meet his; the judges behind him full of rage at being drawn into so absurd an opinion, and abandoned in it by their chief; the bishops waking, as your lordship knows they do, just before they vote, and staring on finding something the matter; while Lord Townsend was close to the bar, getting "Mr. Dunning to put up his glass to look at the head of criminal justice." *Chatham Correspondence*, iv. 327-8.



Safe in that dependance of another kind, what was their judgment, then, as to the only property which not the least distinguished of their fellow-citizens had entirely and exclusively to count  
 1774.  
 æt. 46. upon for subsistence and support?

First for the opinions of the judges. Five declared their belief that, by the common law of England, the sole right of multiplying copies of any work was vested for ever in him, by the exercise of whose genius, faculties, or industry such work had been produced; and that no enactment had yet been passed, of force to limit that estate in fee.\* The special verdict in the case of *Millar v. Taylor* found it as a fact, "that before the reign of Queen Anne it was usual to purchase from authors the perpetual copyright of their books, and to assign the same from hand to hand for valuable considerations, and to make them the subject of family settlements;" and, in the subsequent elaborate judgment, Lord Mansfield, Mr. Justice Willes, and Mr. Justice Aston, concurred in holding that copyright was still perpetual by the common law, and not limited, except as to penalties, by the statute. Six other judges, on the contrary, held that this perpetual property which undoubtedly existed at common law, had been reduced to a short term by an act passed in the reign of Queen Anne, and somewhat strangely entitled (if this were indeed its right construction) as for the encouragement of literature.

\* Arthur Murphy, at this time practising as a barrister, argued the case against the perpetual right, as counsel for Donaldson and the other appellants (*Foot's Life*, 356). He had already, five years earlier, defended against Millar's prosecution a Scotch pirate named Taylor, for having seized and appropriated Thomson's *Seasons*. I mention this because his argument, in which I have little doubt that Johnson assisted him, is a somewhat elaborate statement of the reasoning in favour of the limitation of the author's right, and is partly printed in *Foot's Life*, 340-6. It is to be hoped, however, that Johnson did not supply him with the hint for one part of his defence, which would be equally good as an argument against the admission of any kind of property in the production of a book. "To whom," says Murphy, "is it owing that many valuable compositions are now to be had in pocket volumes? To the country booksellers altogether . . . and the London booksellers, in their own defence, and not from choice, have had recourse to the same measure. The present defendant lives at Berwick: he goes about to fairs and markets with a cart, and there disposes of Thomson's *Seasons*, &c. by which means a taste for reading is propagated in the country, where perhaps, without his activity, that benefit would not be so extensive."

Chief Justice Mansfield's opinion would have equalised these opposing judgments ; but, though retaining it still as strongly as when it had decided the right in his own court, the highest tribunal of common law, he thought it becoming not then <sup>1774.</sup> to repeat it. Lord Camden upon this moved and carried <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> a reversal of Lord Mansfield's decision, by reversing the decree which had been founded upon it. The House of Lords thus declared the statute of Anne to have been a confiscation to the public use, after a certain brief term, of such rights of property in the fruits of his own labour and genius, as, up to the period of its enactment, an author had undoubtedly possessed.

Lord Camden glorified this result as an advantage to literature itself. For he held that genius was intended not for the benefit of the individual who possessed it, but the universal benefit of the race ; and, believing Fame to be its sufficient reward, thought that all who deserved so divine a recompense, spurning delights and living laborious days, should scorn and reject every other. The real price which genius sets upon its labours, he fervently exclaimed, is Immortality, and posterity pays that.\* On the other hand, Mr. Justice Willes announced an opinion hardly less earnest in its tone, to the effect that he held it to be wise in every state to encourage men of letters, without precise regard to what the measure of their powers might be ; and that the easiest and most equal way of doing it was by securing to them the property of their own works. By that means, nobody contributed who was not willing ; and though a good book might be run down, and a

\* "Glory is the reward of science; and those who deserve it scorn all meaner views. I speak not of the scribblers for bread, who tease the world with their wretched productions; fourteen years is too long a period for their perishable trash. It was not for gain that Bacon, Newton, Milton, Locke, instructed and delighted the world. . . . When the bookseller offered Milton five pounds for his *Paradise Lost*, he did not reject the offer and commit his piece to the flames, nor did he accept the miserable pittance as the reward of his labours; he knew that the real price of his work was immortality, and that posterity would pay it." *Parl. Hist.* xvii. 992. Having thus a great lawyer's opinion of those who "scribble for their bread," one would much like to have known what he thought of those who quibble for their bread, and whether the one was not quite as respectable as the other.

bad one cried up, for a time, yet sooner or later the reward would be fairly proportioned to the merit of the work. "A writer's fame," added this learned and upright judge, "will not be  
<sup>1774.</sup> "the less, that he has bread; without being under the  
<sup>Æt. 46.</sup> "necessity, that he may get bread, of prostituting his pen to  
 "flattery or to party."

Such interest as society showed in the discussion, went wholly with the majestic sentiments of Camden. "The very thought," wrote Lord Chatham to Lord Shelburne, "of coining literature  
 "into ready rhino! Why, it is as illiberal as it is illegal."\* So runs the circle of injustice. Attempt to get social station by your talents, and you are illiberal; use your talents without social station to commend them, and you are despised. It is nevertheless probable that the reader who may have accompanied me through this narrative thus far, will think it not "illiberal" to put these rival and opposing doctrines to the practical test of the Life and Death it has recorded. To that, in the individual case, they may now be left; with such illustrative comment from the nature and the claims of Goldsmith's writings, and the peculiarities of his character, as already I have amply supplied.

Let this be added. The debt which Lord Camden proclaimed due to genius (though, from his conduct on the only occasion when they met, he probably did not think it due to Goldsmith),† has to this date been amply paid in the fame of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the *Citizen of the World*, the *Deserted Village*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, and the *Traveller*. Goldsmith died in the prime of his age and his powers, because his strength had been overtasked and his mind was ill at ease; but, by this, the world's enjoyment of what he left has been in no respect weakened or impaired. Nor was his lot upon the whole an unhappy one, for him or for us. Nature is vindicated in the sorrows of her favourite children; for a thousand enduring and elevating pleasures survive, to redeem their temporary sufferings. The acquisition of wealth, the attainment of tranquillity and worldly ease, so eagerly coveted and

\* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv. 332.

† See *ante*, 228-9.

unscrupulously toiled for, are not themselves achieved without attendant losses ; and not without much to soften the harshness of anxiety and poverty, to show what gains may be saved out of the greatest apparent disadvantage, and to render us all some <sup>1774.</sup>  
solid assistance out of even his thriftless imprudent insolvent <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> circumstances, had Goldsmith lived and died. He worthily did the work that was in him to do ; proved himself in his garret a gentleman of nature ; left the world no ungenerous bequest ; and went his unknown way. Nor have posterity been backward to acknowledge the debt which his contemporaries left them to discharge ; and it is with calm, unruffled, joyful aspect on the one hand, and with grateful, loving, eager admiration on the other, that the creditor and his debtors at length stand face to face.

All this is the world's honour as well as gain ; which has yet to consider, notwithstanding, with a view to its own larger profit in both, if its debt to the man of genius might not earlier be discharged, and if the thorns which only become invisible beneath the laurel that overgrows his grave, should not rather, while he lives, be plucked away. But it is not an act of parliament that can determine this ; even though it were an act to restore to the man of letters the rights of which the legislature has thought fit to deprive him. The world must exercise those higher privileges which legislation follows and obeys, before the proper remedy can be found for literary wrongs. Mere wealth would not have supplied it in Goldsmith's day, and does not supply it now.

This book has been written to little purpose, if the intention can be attributed to it of claiming for the literary man either more money than is proportioned to the work he does by the appreciation it commands, or immunity from those conditions of prudence, industry, and a knowledge of the multiplication table, which are inseparable from success in all other walks of life. But, with a design far other than that, one object of it has been to show that the very character of the writer's calling, by the thoughts which he creates, by the emotions he is able to inspire, by the happiness he may extend to distant generations, so far places him



on a different level from the tradesman, merchant, lawyer, or physician, who has his wares and merchandise or advice to sell, that

whereas in the latter case the service is as definite as the re-  
<sup>1774.</sup>  
 ward due to it, in the former a balance must be always left  
 Art. 46. which only time can adjust fairly. In the vast majority of cases,

too, even the attempt at adjustment is not made until the tuneful tongue is silent, and the ear deaf to praise; nor, much as the extension of the public of readers has done to diminish the probabilities of a writer's suffering, are the chances of his lot bettered even yet in regard to that fair and full reward. Another object of this book has therefore been to point out, that literature ought long ago to have received from the state an amount of recognition which would at least have placed its highest cultivators on a level with other and not worthier recipients of its gratitude. The lapse of time, in widening and enlarging the dominion of intellect, has not lessened this grave necessity. The mind of the nation now more than ever claims to be recognised for itself. More than ever it is felt as a national opprobrium that such of our countrymen as have heretofore achieved greatness, whether in literature or in science, should have struggled into fame without the aid of English institutions, by waging continuous war against disparagement and depression, and in sheer defiance of both forcing their reluctant way.\* Every season has its fashions, indeed, in literature and other things; and, at the service of the popular man

\* "The Order of the Bath was lately re-organised for the express purpose of still further extending its honours to civil merit: but how was *civil merit* understood? Exclusively in the sense of diplomatic and administrative talent. . . . Some months since we published a table in which we compared the salaries granted by Government to persons employed in a literary or scientific capacity with the emoluments of other officials. In that document the reader will perceive how finely the estimate of value tapers off as it approaches the departments of thought and invention. The door-keeper of the House of Commons receives 74*l.* per annum more than the Royal Astronomer, or the Principal Librarian at the British Museum; and the board-room porter at the Admiralty enjoys precisely the same stipend as the third Assistant Astronomer Royal. We do not refer to such instances as special ones. They happen to be among the latest, and we therefore select them as ordinary examples of a system."—*The Athenæum*, 15th July, 1848, from a series of papers on the Claims of Literature published on the appearance of the first edition of this biography. The "table" referred to appeared on the 1st of April, 1848.

who cares to attend them, there will always be great men's feasts and rooms full of gaping admirers, such as, in Goldsmith's day, and only a few years before Sterne's own miserable death, the creator of Mr. Shandy and my Uncle Toby had the good fortune to enjoy. But such cases only more glaringly exhibit the disproportion that exists between the power which a writer exerts in his vocation, and the respect which he ought to be, and is not, able to claim for himself. It is not with patronage in that sense, or in any sense, that the claim of literature, the equal claim of science, the claim of human intellect worthily exercised, to its due place among men, has really anything to do. But its relation to the state involves higher considerations; for the best offices of service to a state are those in which thinkers are required, and, more than many of its lawyers, more than all its soldiers, it is in such offices that the higher class of men of letters and science are competent to assist. Yet, if any one would measure the weight of contempt and neglect that now presses down such service, let him compare the deeds for which an English parliament ordinarily bestows its thanks, its peerages, and its pensions, with the highest grade of honour or reward that it has ever vouchsafed to the loftiest genius, the highest distinction in literature, the greatest moral or mechanical achievement, by which not simply England has been benefited and exalted, but the whole human race.

Other classes of the community, however, besides our rulers and governors, have their share in inflicting the wrong, and must have a larger share in bringing about the remedy. Society cannot help being swayed and mastered in the most important of its interests, yet it can steadily refuse to recognise the men who hold and exercise that power. Partly because of the sordid ills that attended authorship in such days as have been described in this volume, partly from the fact that it is a calling daily entered by men whom neither natural gifts nor laborious acquirements entitle to success in it, the belief is still very common that to be an author is to be a kind of vagrant, picking up subsistence as she can, a loaf to-day, a crumb to-morrow, and that to such a man no

special signification of respect in social life can possibly be paid. When Lord Mansfield proclaimed from the bench that there really existed such a thing as an author's right to his copy, his <sup>1774.</sup> meaning was as little understood as, three-quarters of a <sub>Æt. 46.</sub> century later, the author's claim to those few more years' enjoyment of the fruits of his own labour or genius which thirty years ago was humbly solicited, and painfully recovered,\* out of the confiscation applauded by Lord Camden. Nor, in marking thus the low account and general disesteem of their calling, are the literary class themselves to be exempted from blame. "It were "well," said Goldsmith on one occasion, with bitter truth, "if "none but the dunces of society were combined to render the profession of an author ridiculous or unhappy;" and he proceeds to say that one writer quarrelling with another will set all the world that cannot write laughing at him, though, whatever they may think of themselves, it is at least two to one but they are greater blockheads than the most scribbling dunce they affect to despise.† The profession themselves have yet to learn the secret of co-opera-

\* By Mr. Justice (then Mr. Serjeant) Talfourd, who in his preface to the republication of his *Three Speeches on Copyright* (1840) describes as "a compromise" the measure which the House of Commons (by mutilating it before they permitted it to pass) proclaimed to be far too liberal a compromise; declares his conviction of the justice of restoring perpetual copyright; and illustrates his case by reference to the dying struggle and destitution of De Foe. "Had every schoolboy, whose young imagination has been prompted by his great work, and whose heart has learned to throb in the strange yet familiar solitude he created, given even the halfpenny of the statute of Anne, there would have been no want of a provision for his children, no need of a subscription for a statue to his memory!" As I transcribe these words (January 1854), I become acquainted with the most striking practical comment which it would be possible for them to receive, in the fact that there is now living in Kennington, in deep though uncomplaining poverty, James De Foe, aged 77, the great-grandson of the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. The result of the mention thus made (I am now writing in January 1871) was a subscription under the management of Mr. Dickens, Mr. Charles Knight, and myself, out of which, up to May 1857 two hundred pounds were paid, in small sums according to his needs, to the worthy old man; on whose death, in that month, the small balance was handed over to his two daughters. In further aid of the latter some small additional moneys were afterwards collected; and upon a mention of the case by Lord Shaftesbury to the then prime minister, Lord Palmerston at once directed 100*l.* to be contributed out of the Queen's bounty to James De Foe's daughters.

† *Enquiry*, chap. ix.

tion; they have to put away internal jealousies; they have to claim for themselves, as poor Goldsmith after his fashion very loudly did, that defined position from which greater respect, and more frequent consideration in public life, could not <sup>1774.</sup> long be withheld; in fine, they have frankly to feel that <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> their vocation, properly regarded, ranks with the worthiest, and that on all occasions to do justice to it, and to each other, is the way to obtain justice from the world. If writers had thus been true to themselves, the subject of Copyright might have been equitably settled when attention was first drawn to it; but while De Foe was urging the author's claim Swift was calling De Foe a fellow that had been pilloried, and we have still to discuss as in *formâ pauperis* the rights of the English author.

Confiscation is a hard word; but after the decision given above of the highest English court, it is the word which alone describes fairly the statute of Anne for encouragement of literature. That is now superseded by another statute, having the same gorgeous name, and the same inglorious meaning: for even this last enactment, sorely resisted as it was, leaves England behind any other country in the world in the amount of their own property secured to her authors. In some, to this day, perpetual copyright exists; and though it may be reasonable, as Dr. Johnson argued that it was,\* to surrender a part for greater efficiency of protection to the

\* Dr. Johnson, says Boswell, speaking of the part he took when the question was under debate in the House of Lords, "was zealous against a perpetuity; but he thought that the term of the exclusive right of authors should be considerably enlarged. He was then for granting a hundred years." (ii. 223.) I will here subjoin also the argument by which Johnson, at Langton's dinner-table, illustrated this zeal against a perpetuity to which Boswell refers. It really contains the substance of all that has been, or can be, urged against the author on behalf of the public; and which no author would think of resisting, if only honest effect were given to the important admission with which it closes. "There seems," said he, "to be in authors a stronger right of property than that by occupancy; a metaphysical right, a right, as it were, of creation, which should from its nature be perpetual: but the consent of nations is against it; and indeed reason and the interests of learning are against it; for were it to be perpetual, no book, however useful, could be universally diffused amongst mankind, should the proprietor take it into his head to restrain its circulation. No book could have the advantage of being edited with notes, however necessary to its elucidation, should the proprietor perversely oppose it.



rest, yet the commonest dictates of natural justice might at least require that an author's family should not be beggared of their inheritance as soon as his own capacity to provide for them may <sup>1774.</sup> have ceased. In every continental country this is cared for, the <sup>Æt. 46.</sup> lowest term secured by the most niggardly arrangement being twenty-five years; whereas in England it is the munificent number of seven. Yet the most laborious works, and often the most delightful, are for the most part of a kind which the hereafter only can repay. The poet, the historian, the scientific investigator, do indeed find readers to-day; but if they have laboured with success, they have produced books whose substantial reward is not the large and temporary, but the limited and constant, nature of their sale. No consideration of moral right exists, no principle of economical science can be stated, which would justify the seizure of such books by the public, before they have had the chance of remunerating the genius and labour of their producers.

But though parliament can easily commit this wrong, it is not in such case the quarter to look to for redress. There is no hope of a better state of things till the author shall enlist upon his side the power of which parliament is but the inferior expression. The true remedy for literary wrongs must flow from a higher sense than has at any period yet prevailed in England, of the duties and responsibilities assumed by the public writer; and of the social consideration and respect that their effectual discharge should have an undisputed right to claim. The world will be greatly the gainer when such time shall arrive; and when the biography of the man

"For the general good of the world, therefore, whatever valuable work has once been created by an author, and issued out by him, should be understood as no longer in his power, but as belonging to the public; at the same time the author is entitled to an adequate reward. This he should have by an exclusive right to his work for a considerable number of years." *Boswell*, iii. 302-3. As Mr. Carlyle put it, in his immortal petition on the Copyright Bill printed among his *Miscellanies*, to which no answer by way of argument will be found possible, the Legislature should forbid all Thomas Teggs and other extraneous persons entirely unconcerned in an author's adventure to steal from him his small winnings for a space of sixty years at shortest. "After sixty years, unless your Honourable House provide otherwise, they may begin to steal."

of genius shall no longer be a picture of the most harsh struggles and mean necessities to which man's life is subject, exhibited as in shameful contrast to the glory of his fame. With society itself rests the advent of that time.



THE MEN WHO TO MANKIND MOST GOOD HAVE BROUGHT,  
 HAVE HAD THE WORLD'S WORST EVIL TO ENDURE;  
 NOR, TILL THE WORLD, FOR WHICH ITS FOOLS HAVE THOUGHT,  
 THINKS FOR ITSELF, CAN WISDOM BRING THE CURE.

## APPENDIX TO VOLUME II.

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A. (i. 14, 125; ii. 385, 394, 424, &c. &c.)

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### WHAT WAS PROPOSED AND WHAT WAS DONE FOR THE RELATIVES OF GOLDSMITH.

FOR nearly thirty years nothing was done. Thirteen years had passed before it was discovered that anything might or could be done. The project of an edition with a life by Johnson was overthrown by a paltry dispute about the copyright of *She Stoops to Conquer*, and no one appeared to have anything to suggest in its place. At last the attention of Dr. Percy, then the Bishop of Dromore, was called, when in Dublin, to the destitute state of Maurice Goldsmith, in a manner which it was difficult to resist; and he opened a correspondence on the subject with his London friends. He described Maurice to them as a cabinet-maker, who had been a decent tradesman, a very honest worthy man, very unfortunate, and in great indigence. He urged subscriptions for his present help, and said that even a "guinea" "a piece from the members of the Club" would be a great relief to him. Nevertheless this modest suggestion failed; and it was not till near two years from the time when the bishop first discovered Maurice's destitution (the "poor creature," as he calls him, having been "starving" in that interval), that a little place was obtained for him in the License-office of Dublin, and, for the scanty help of its additional pittance, he was made mace-bearer to the Irish Academy.

What meanwhile had been started in another way for his relief, and the result of it, I must relate as distinctly as I can from the imperfect memoranda left in Percy's correspondence. The bishop had of course been consulted as to the proposed edition and life by Johnson, to whom indeed, for a time, he had handed materials for it possessed by himself (many of which, I regret to say, Johnson lost); and now, somewhat precipitately, under an impulse of compassion for the wretched poverty of these relatives of their old friend, particularly,

as has been seen, of poor Maurice, and part of Henry's family, he issued proposals and entered into engagements for an edition, first of the poems only, and afterwards of the miscellaneous writings, to be published with a view to their benefit, which he seems to have found it very difficult and irksome to redeem. Several years passed in merely adding to his materials, for which Malone, Mrs. Hodson, Henry Goldsmith's widow, Dr. Wilson, and many others, were placed under contribution. For, the foundations of such a memoir had been earlier laid, even by Goldsmith himself; who, in the hope that Percy might become his biographer, had, "one rainy day" in Northumberland-house, dictated certain facts and dates about himself, and subsequently handed to Percy several pieces in manuscript, "among "a parcel of letters and papers, some written by himself, and some "addressed to him, with not much explanation." (Percy to Stevens, *Nichols*, vii. 31.) In the same letter, I may add, the bishop tells his friend, whose help he has been asking to determine the authenticity of a poem afterwards printed as Goldsmith's and certainly his, that he has "another printed poem of Doctor Goldsmith's in his own hand—"writing that is undoubtedly his, which is of more consequence" (this was a copy of verses addressed to a lady going to Ranelagh, or to a masquerade, and it is surely a pity, being of such consequence, that the bishop should afterwards have lost it, which he did\*), "together with many original and some very curious letters." (*Ibid.*) There was thus no lack of materials for what had been proposed.

Still, year succeeded year, and the biography was not begun. Then, an enthusiastic Irish clergyman, Dr. Thomas Campbell, who had been an occasional visitor to London about the time of Goldsmith's death, a friend of the Thrales, a devoted admirer of Johnson, and fond of dabbling in literature, finding himself with leisure on his hands in his comfortable Irish rectory (that of Clones, in Monaghan), offered his services to the bishop to throw what he had collected into form. On this friendly work Campbell appears to have been engaged from

\* In a letter to Malone, in 1785, the bishop is less tolerant of Johnson's carelessness in this matter than he became in later years, when he had precisely the same sin himself to answer for. "The paper which you have recovered in my own hand—"writing, giving dates and many interesting particulars relating to his life, and "which I had concluded to be irrevocably lost, was dictated to me by himself one "rainy day at Northumberland-house, and sent by me to Dr. Johnson. The other "memoranda on the subject were transmitted to me by his brother and others of his "family, to afford materials for a life of Goldsmith which Johnson was to write and "publish for their benefit. But he utterly forgot them and the subject; so that when "he composed Goldsmith's epitaph he gave a wrong place for that of his birth." Such was both Percy's and Malone's impression at this time. But subsequent information showed that Pallas was the place of birth, and not, as had been imagined, Elphin.



the spring of 1790 to the autumn of 1791.\* The manuscript of an outline memoir being then placed in the bishop's hands, the latter made very copious notes in its margin, which his chaplain, Mr. Boyd, afterwards embodied in the text, re-writing portions at the bishop's suggestion, and putting Campbell's outline into reasonably complete and final shape. Poor Maurice (whose trade of cabinet-making had never thriven with him, and whose disappointment at his famous brother's insolvency I have described) had meanwhile been "enquiring," with a very natural anxiety (Campbell to Percy, *Nichols*, vii. 783), after the long-delayed scheme for his benefit; but not till the summer of 1793 had the bishop any news to give, and it then came too late for Maurice. "I am glad to find," writes Campbell (*Nichols*, vii. 790), "that you have brought the affair of Goldsmith to so good an issue—but, alas! poor Maurice. He is to receive no comfort from your lordship's labours in his behalf. He departed from a miserable life last winter, and luckily has left no children; but he has left a widow, and 'faith a very nice one, who called on me &c. so that you will not want claimants."

\* For various allusions to the work during its progress see the correspondence of Campbell and Percy in *Nichols's Illustrations*, vii. 759-95. The first sight we get of Campbell himself is in one of Mrs. Thrale's lively letters written to Johnson from Bath, in May 1776. "We have a flashy friend here already, who is much your adorer: I wonder how you will like him? An Irishman he is; very handsome, very hot-headed, loud and lively, and sure to be a favourite with you, he tells us, 'for he can live with a man of 'ever so odd a temper.' My master laughs, but likes him; and it diverts me to think what you will do when he professes that he will 'clean shoes for you; that he could shed his blood for you; with twenty more 'extravagant flights—and you say, I flatter! 'Upon my honour, sir, and indeed 'now,' as Dr. C—I's phrase is, 'I am but a twitter to him.'" *Piozzi Letters*, i. 329. [Dr. C—I was certainly Campbell, but in supposing him to have been also Mrs. Thrale's "flashy friend" I was misled by Mr. Nichols. The friend described by Mrs. Thrale in May 1776 was a worshipper of Johnson, named Musgrave; his other Irish visitor, Campbell, having come to London in May 1775, and being already well known to the set. Of this earlier visit, I should add, curious revelation was made a few years ago in a little book published (1854) at Sydney with the title, *Diary of a Visit to England in 1775 by an Irishman* (DR. THOMAS CAMPBELL). Edited with notes by Samuel Raymond, M.A. Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. The MS, found in one of the offices of the Supreme Court, had doubtless been left there by Campbell's eldest nephew and heir, who went out to New South Wales in 1810, and held a civil employment there. See *Edinburgh Review*, cx. 322-42. The little book thus strangely exhumed is a worthy addition even to Boswell, going over some of his ground with new and valuable touches. I have given one respecting Burke on a previous page (272 n); and have only very much to regret that Goldsmith was dead before Campbell came to London. I quote the single reference to him. "When Dr. Goldsmith was mentioned, and Dr. Percy's intention of writing 'his life, he" (Dr. Johnson) "expressed his approbation, strongly adding that 'Goldsmith was the best writer he ever knew upon every subject he wrote upon.' 1870.]

Nevertheless, the supposed "good issue" proves no issue at all; another unaccountable delay intervenes; and January 1796 arrives with everything still unsettled. For the "trade," being now banded together to work the profitable and already richly-yielding farm of Goldsmith's works to their own benefit, could not agree with the bishop on what would be a reasonable percentage *from one edition* for the benefit of Goldsmith's family; and, as it was now too late to resort to a subscription, the bishop was in their power. The dispute appears to have raged for more than a year and a half: Percy, for the family, insisting on a payment of money, together with a small number of copies to be given them for sale; and Cadell and Davies, for the booksellers, refusing to consent to anything more than a payment altogether in books out of the impression printed. That the bishop had himself always contemplated the latter in partial satisfaction of his project, appears from an allusion in one of Campbell's letters (*Nichols*, vii. 777); but, for the present relief of Maurice Goldsmith's widow and Henry Goldsmith's daughter, he held the accompanying money-payment also to be absolutely essential.

Meanwhile it could not be other than notorious to a majority of those who had been in familiar intercourse with Goldsmith, that the greater number of his family, who had inherited no richer possession than his name, were almost literally starving. A letter of Esther Goldsmith's addressed to Mr. Cooper Walker of Dublin (*Prior*, ii. 577) leaves it not doubtful that Dr. Barnard and Lord Charlemont must have known this on authority not to be disputed. "From your goodness on former occasions," she writes, "and kind attention to me, I take the liberty of requesting the honour of a line from you, to inform me what your opinion is in regard to the Academy house, whether I may have hopes of being housekeeper to it. I blush to give this trouble to a gentleman who is almost a stranger to me in every respect except my misfortunes; but I trust I have an advocate in your humane heart. I have informed you, sir, of the Bishop of Killaloe's goodness in handing in my memorial, and also the kind reception it met with from the members present. May I presume to beg that you will be so kind as to recommend me to Lord Charlemont, which would serve the business much, and infinitely serve me?" This well-expressed earnest letter was written in 1793; yet years passed, and the poor modest petitioner was as far as ever from that miserable object of her ambition, to be allowed to keep the rooms and sweep out the dust of the new Irish Academy. It seems to have been generally understood that the entire question of Goldsmith and his family was in the hands of Percy and the booksellers, and that everything must depend on the settlement of that dispute.

Great anger and excitement now began to mark its continuance, and in September 1797 Percy put the case before George Steevens. This curious letter, which reveals more of the details of this not very creditable transaction than any other that appears to have been

preserved out of all the correspondence, was printed a few years ago in the *Athenæum* (29th April, 1848). It shows us, not simply that the booksellers adhered to their refusal to advance a shilling of money, but that they would give only 250 copies of the books in satisfaction of all claims; and this, too, on condition that all the copies were to be sold in Ireland, and that Percy was to pay the expense of their carriage to that country, as well as the cost of binding them as they might be required for sale; or, supposing he insisted on liberty to sell in England, then they would restrict their munificence to 200 copies "stitched in blue paper." The reader will observe also the not unimportant avowal, in this letter, that it was only an objection to appearing before the public as his "*ostensible* biographer" which withheld Percy from openly avowing his responsibility for the facts and statements put forth in the Memoir.

"I wish," writes the Bishop to Steevens, dating his communication from "near Northampton," 6th September, 1797, "to consult you "about an answer I am about to send to a captious letter from "Messrs. Cadell and Davies, who have been in treaty for what "*Reliques* I have of Goldsmith; which I want to make advantageous "to two poor women nearly related to him. When I was last in "England I had reason to expect they would give me 200 guineas for "them in money, and fifty copies of a proposed edition in four vols; "as also repay me twenty or thirty guineas for a Life, which I was "to have written by some man of character, into which would be "inserted a good number of curious letters by or concerning him, "that would give considerable light and importance to his biographic "history. (I have particuilar reasons for not being myself his *ostensible* "biographer.) I accordingly got such a life written by Mr. Boyd, "the ingenious translator of Danto,\* for which I have paid him "thirty guineas out of my own pocket. Since my return to England "Messrs. Cadell and Davies, who take upon them to manage for all "the proprietors, utterly refused to pay any money for the poor "women (though they did not refuse to repay me my thirty guineas); "but proposed, as soon as the four vols. of this collected edition of "Dr. Goldsmith's works is completed, to 'supply to the order of the "Bishop of Dromore 250 perfect sets, in sheets, of the said edition, "free of all charge, for the purpose of the said sets being sent to "Ireland, and disposed of in that kingdom, for the benefit of two "surviving relations of Dr. Goldsmith.' Knowing that the poor "women would not be able to dispose of them unless I went about "soliciting subscriptions through that kingdom, which I cannot now "submit to, and that our Irish booksellers would some of them get "their books and never pay them, I desired they would leave out the

\* Mr. Boyd was Percy's chaplain, and, as I have stated in a previous passage, had completed Campbell's draft of the Memoir by engrafting into it Percy's own remarks and suggestions.



“condition of *the books being all to be disposed of in Ireland*; and allow them in part to be sold here. They now will admit of no other alternative but either my sending the 250 copies in sheets to Ireland, with the carriage at my own expense, there to be stitched or bound, and sold, &c—or else they will give me here only 200 copies for them, stitched in blue paper, with liberty to dispose of them in England. This proposal is made in terms so uncivil, that I think they wish me to be affronted, and so break off all further treaty; which I should really prefer, with the loss of my thirty guineas, but for the sake of the poor women: and out of compassion for their poverty, I have submitted to the rudest treatment in the whole of the correspondence, as you will acknowledge when I come to show you their letters. Before I answer their last letter containing this proposal, I wish to consult you. What would you advise? If I take 200 copies here, I shall have some difficulty in selling them to booksellers of character; for, to discourage me from printing an edition for the charity, they have informed me that all the principal booksellers in London are connected with them; and I must after all send some of the books to Ireland. I suppose the binders will require a shilling a volume for sewing the 250 copies in blue paper, &c. This would be 40*l* (*i.e.* the 200 copies), which, with the privilege of selling in England, may perhaps be more than equivalent in value to the fifty copies in sheets, and the whole to be confined to Ireland. But you can probably inform me what the binders would demand; and of the Irish market I can judge myself. Pray favour me with your opinion: and if you please, as early as possible. . . . Give my compliments to Mr. Reed, and thanks for assisting in the research about Goldsmith's Epilogue, for which I must desire you to accept yourself my kindest acknowledgments.”

To this communication, and all its sorry and shameful details, most characteristic was the reply of George Steevens. He did not spare the booksellers, “the priests of Mammon,” as he calls them; who might be brought to their senses, he thought, by the threat of a new subscription-edition “prefaced by an account of their behaviour;” for “the works of Goldsmith are among their staple commodities, and they will hardly choose they should fall into any other hands than those of their leading publishers; nor can I believe they will think it prudent either to lose, or provoke, a pen so pointed and so popular as yours. It should seem, however,” continues Steevens, “from your own representation of this affair, that you only *expected* they would give you &c, not that any specific terms were formally settled between the knights of the rubrick post and your lordship.” And he goes on to state that he had learnt that morning, from the records of the Chapter coffee-house, that the proposal made by the booksellers as long ago as November 1795, had been “exactly the terms they now offer; at least no mention is there made of the 200*l*. for the endow-



"ment of the poor women." Wherefore he concludes his letter by recommending the bishop to make the best of his bargain; since he must submit, if he cannot intimidate; and quits the subject with this pithy remark. "The works of Goldsmith will always be sought after, "but you will discover little zeal to promote the welfare of his needy "relations." (*Nichols*, vii. 31.)

On this advice Percy reluctantly acted; and in a few weeks afterwards the agreement was signed, and the memoir placed in Cadell and Davies's hands. But a doom seemed to hang over the project, and no sooner was one obstruction cleared than new difficulties started in its way. The trade could not now settle among themselves what the edition was to contain; the bishop, resenting very angrily what had passed, would give no further help which he had the power to withhold; on a new editor being selected in the person of Mr. Rose (Cowper's friend), Malone appears to have joined Percy in a protest against any tampering with the memoir; and, probably from this protest not meeting with proper attention, the name of the Bishop of Dromero was formally and finally withdrawn from the scheme. This period in its luckless history brings me to 1800, when (I now quote from a letter of the bishop to Dr. Anderson, written in 1808) "Doctor Goldsmith's niece, daughter of his eldest brother the clergy- "man, being reduced to indigence, on her account the bishop applied, "in 1800, to Messrs. Cadell and Davies to afford some present relief, "to alleviate the distress occasioned by the delay of the publication; "which being refused by them, the bishop supplied the same himself, "and continued to do so till her death, which took place before Mr. "Archer had come to a settlement for the 125 copies transmitted to "him." (*Nichols*, vii. 191.)

The last allusion explains the character of the agreement with the trade to which Dr. Percy had finally and so reluctantly consented. The booksellers had consented to the magnificent compromise of allowing one half the copies in sheets to be sold in England! In consideration of the memoir with which he had supplied them, they were to transmit to him, on publication, two hundred and fifty unbound copies of the *Miscellaneous Works* to which it was prefixed; one hundred and twenty-five to be sold in Dublin, and one hundred and twenty-five in London, for the benefit of the Goldsmiths. Mr. Archer was the Dublin bookseller to whom the Irish copies were at last consigned on the appearance of the book in 1801; and that Cadell and Davies had taken a sound business view of the matter in refusing to advance money on those copies even a few months before publication, the bishop, writing six years after it, makes pretty clear to us by the remark, that "part of these 125 copies transmitted to Mr. Archer are "still unsold, and as *two more elegant editions* have been printed in "London, which it is feared will impede the sale of these, it is in- "tended to get them into the country and dispose of them by private "subscription." (*Nichols*, vii. 191.)

So much for the Irish branch of this trade-munificence to poor Goldsmith's memory. From the same letter I can also indicate its equally generous flow in England, where a new claimant had suddenly appeared. "Of the two hundred and fifty copies," writes Percy, "one half were allowed to be sold in England, and these were delivered to Mr. White, bookseller in Fleet-street London, with an injunction that he was to account for all the profits arising from the same to Doctor Goldsmith's brother, Charles Goldsmith, who had returned from the West Indies with his family, and resided in the neighbourhood of Tottenham-court [-road]. From this brother of Doctor Goldsmith the bishop frequently heard, informing him that the payments were duly made, and whatever copies he desired were delivered to him to dispose of among his friends for his own benefit. He believes Mr. Charles Goldsmith is now dead, but tho' account is still open with his family." (*Nichols*, vii. 191.)

The circumstances of brother Charles's return have been described (*ante*, i. 125); and from the son of Mr. Robert Cabbell Roffe, whose communication to the *Mirror* is there quoted, I received (16th June, 1862) an earlier private letter of his father's, and a letter from himself, in further illustration of his father's statement and of the copy of Sir Joshua's portrait mentioned in it. The earlier letter of Mr. Robert Roffe (59, Ossulston-street, Camden-town, 12th Feb. 1821) informs us: "At an early age Charles left his parents in Ireland, and after wandering about the world for many years, settled at last in one of the West India Islands, where he acquired a tolerable property, which he brought to England, and began spending faster than he got it. My acquaintance with him commenced about twenty-three years ago, upon the occasion of his putting his son apprentice to the same master as myself. He often invited me to his house (his family consisted of himself, his wife, two daughters, and one son, at that time). I found him an intelligent man, but with manners not at all softened by having been a negro-driver in the West Indies. He was a perfect bashaw in his family, and treated his wife, who was a Creole, according to my feelings very uncivilly. His eldest daughter died in about three years after his settling in London. I attended her funeral, and it was with difficulty I could wear the appearance of sorrow, from the odd manner in which he affected it, and the remarks he made upon the parson not coming in time to bury his *dare child* as he called her. At the peace of Amiens, he sold some of his property in Somers-town, and went to settle in the South of France; but was obliged to leave it in a hurry, by the way of Holland, for fear of being detained a prisoner by Buonaparte. In consequence he arrived in England very poor, sold more of his property, and ultimately died almost in a state of second childhood, at a lodging in the same street in which I live. His wife, with a son he had by her in England, went to the West Indies. His son Henry, who was my fellow-apprentice, tried

“engraving for two or three years, when he took such a dislike to it, that his father shipped him off to his native country. These particulars, I am aware, can derive no interest except from their being those of the brother of the immortal Goldsmith, and in that view I relate them. He was very like the portrait of Dr. Goldsmith by Sir Joshua Reynolds. He once showed me a piece of original poetry by his brother, when he was nine years of age.”

Referring to the Reynolds portrait, Mr. Edwin Roffe writes to me (16th June, 1862): “A few months ago, a friend, upon reading my father’s note concerning Goldsmith, said, *I think I know who is now in possession of that very portrait*. Upon further conversation with him, it transpired that an elderly lady (whom I had previously met at my friend’s table) was the supposed possessor. Although it ultimately turned out that my friend was somewhat mistaken, yet the circumstances of the case were somewhat curious. It appeared that during the time Charles Goldsmith resided in the Polygon, this lady and her brother went to reside there; and immediately upon their removal, they went out for a walk (there were beautiful fields near at hand then), and upon returning were for a time doubtful of their house, until one of them espied, through an open parlour-window, the portrait of the poet hanging on the wall. ‘This must be the house, there is the painting.’ ‘But *our* painting hangs in the back-parlour.’ ‘Well, but there it is.’ In this state of dilemma, there was nothing left but to knock at the door, which they did; and to their surprise, found themselves introduced to the family of Oliver Goldsmith’s brother, with the very portrait (mentioned by my father) hanging in the front-parlour, while their own copy of Sir Joshua *was* hanging up next door; but in the back-parlour.”

Out of all that was proposed, then, for the relatives of Goldsmith, the general result of what was done amounted to this. Goldsmith’s last surviving brother died in London in great poverty, scantily relieved from time to time by the necessarily slow sale (for of course all the best channels of circulation were preoccupied) of his share in the copies conceded by the booksellers. The only daughter of his eldest brother, Henry, died in Dublin, even before her share was duly apportioned to her, in distress and indigence yet more extreme. Her mother, Henry’s widow, had meanwhile been contented with the very humble yet at least safe retreat of matron to the Meath Infirmary. Her brother, Henry’s only son, for whom, twenty years earlier, a commission had been obtained, had happily gone to the other side of the Atlantic to achieve a somewhat better fortune. Maurice’s widow was living in Dublin, in extreme poverty; so was Goldsmith’s younger married sister, in Athlone; a third female Goldsmith was a petitioner for the most abject employments; nor does the elder sister, Mrs. Hodson (to members of whose family I have referred in my text, *ante* 172), appear to have had the power, whatever her desires may have been.



to assist these unhappy women. The family left by Charles had been thinned before his death by the death of one of his daughters, the marriage of another, and the return of his eldest son to Jamaica. Happily therefore there remained only the widow and her youngest son, Oliver, for whom, as Bishop Percy expresses it, the munificent trade "account" continued to be kept open. She and they might thus freely subsist, for as long as they could, on the still unsold remainder of books assigned to her husband; yet, alas! her only grateful acknowledgment to her generous patrons was to take flight immediately with her boy for Jamaica. The fate of the married daughter is also traceable. Five years ago the *New York Tribune* announced: "In the town of West Hoboken, New Jersey, resides an old lady—blind, crippled, and suffering from the want of the necessaries of life. She is the niece of Oliver Goldsmith. Her father was the brother of Oliver, and his junior by ten years. He was married in the West Indies at the age of forty-two. Mrs. Hanson was his third child—Catherine. She was married to Mr. John T. Hanson in 1806." Hardly had attention been thus called to her, however, when her death followed, on the 21st of September in the same year, "at the age of eighty-one."

So fared all the known members of this hapless family who had any claim to notice or remembrance in connection with Goldsmith's memory. A few sold and unsold shabby books, "in sheets," represent their pretensions and their hopes, and all that was done to realise them. And how meanwhile had the booksellers fared? They had at once sold all the impressions of the collected works reserved for themselves, and had afterwards issued two handsome editions, unencumbered with any such unnatural interception of their natural profits as a charge for the family of the author. Who can doubt, then, that throughout these transactions the advantage remained clearly with the "trade," and that their prudence as shrewd men of business had been amply asserted and rewarded?

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B. (PAGES 385 AND 424.)

A

## CATALOGUE \*

OF

THE HOUSHOLD FURNITURE,

WITH THE

Select Collection of Scarce, Curious and Valuable Books,

IN

ENGLISH, LATIN, GREEK, FRENCH, ITALIAN, AND OTHER LANGUAGES,

LATE THE LIBRARY OF

DR. GOLDSMITH, Deceased.

WHICH

BY ORDER OF THE ADMINISTRATOR,

Will be Sold by Auction, by

---

 MR. GOOD,
 

---

At his GREAT ROOM, No. 121, Fleet Street,

On TUESDAY the 12th of July, 1774, at Twelve o'Clock.

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 To be viewed on MONDAY, and till the Time of Sale, when Catalogues may be had  
 as above.
 

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*1st*, The highest Bidder to be the Buyer, and if any Dispute arises between any two or more Bidders, the Lot in Dispute to be put up again, or be decided by the Majority of the Company.

*2dly*, No Person to advance less than Six-pence; above one Pound one Shilling; above five Pounds, two Shillings and Six pence; and so in Proportion.

*3dly*, The Buyer to give in his Name and Place of Abode, (if required) and pay five Shillings in the Pound as Earnest for each Lot.

*Lastly*, The Goods to be taken away, with all Faults at the Expence of the Purchaser, within two Days after the Sale is ended, and the remainder of the Purchase-money to be paid on the Delivery; otherwise the Lots to be re-sold, and what Deficiency may arise with the Charges, to be made good by the first Purchaser.

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\* This is an exact reprint, throughout, from the original catalogue in the possession of Mr. Murray, and for its mistakes and misspellings the worthy auctioneer is solely responsible.

## CATALOGUE, &amp;c.

TUESDAY, JULY 12, 1774.

## HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE.

Lot

- 1 A Bath stove, compass front, open border, fender, shovel, tongs and poker.
- 2 One blue morine festoon window-curtain compleat.
- 3 A mahogany dining-table.
- 4 Six ditto hollow seat chairs, covered with blue morine, finished with a double row of brass nails, and check cases.
- 5 A Wilton carpet.
- 6 A sun-shade, line and pulleys, and a deal side-board stained.
- 7 A tea-chest and 2 mahogany card-racks.
- 8 A four-post bedstead, crimson and white check furniture.
- 9 A feather-bed, bolster, and 2 down pillows.
- 10 A check matrass.
- 11 Three blankets and a counterpane.
- 12 Three blue morine window-curtains compleat.
- 13 Two oval glasses, gilt frames.
- 14 Two ditto two-light girandoles.
- 15 A very large dressing-glass, mahogany frame.
- 16 A three-plate bordered chimney-glass, gilt frame.
- 17 A large Wilton carpet.
- 18 A mahogany sofa covered with blue morine, finished with a double row of brass nails, and a check case.
- 19 Eight ditto chairs and check cases.
- 20 Two mahogany compass front card tables, lined.
- 21 A ditto Pembroke table.
- 22 A stove, brass fender, shovel, tongs and poker.
- 23 A stained matted chair, and a wainscot table.
- 24 Two telescopes.
- 25 A steel hilted sword, inlaid with gold, and a black hilted ditto.
- 26 Eleven blue and white octagon dishes, 18 ditto plates and an enamelled bowl.
- 27 A teapot, 5 coffee cups, sugar bason and cover, 4 saucers, and 6 cups.
- 28 Two quart decanters and stoppers, 1 plain ditto, 11 glasses and 1 wine and water glass.
- 29 A pair of bellows, a brush, a footman, a copper tea kettle and a coal scuttle.
- 30 Two pair of plated candlesticks.
- 31 A mahogany tea-board, a fret bordered ditto, a large round japanned ditto, and 2 waiters.
- 32 The Tragic Muse, in a gold frame.

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- [The so-called remark by Goldsmith, I omitted to add to the note at ii. p. 178; was only Mrs. Piozzi's confused and quite erroneous recollection of a passage in one of Goldsmith's uncollected essays, where he whimsically describes a young fellow disinherited for liking gravy so much that when dining with a rich relative he took it all off the dish to himself.]
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